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MAY 15, 2000

NEW YORK

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By David D. Kirkpatrick

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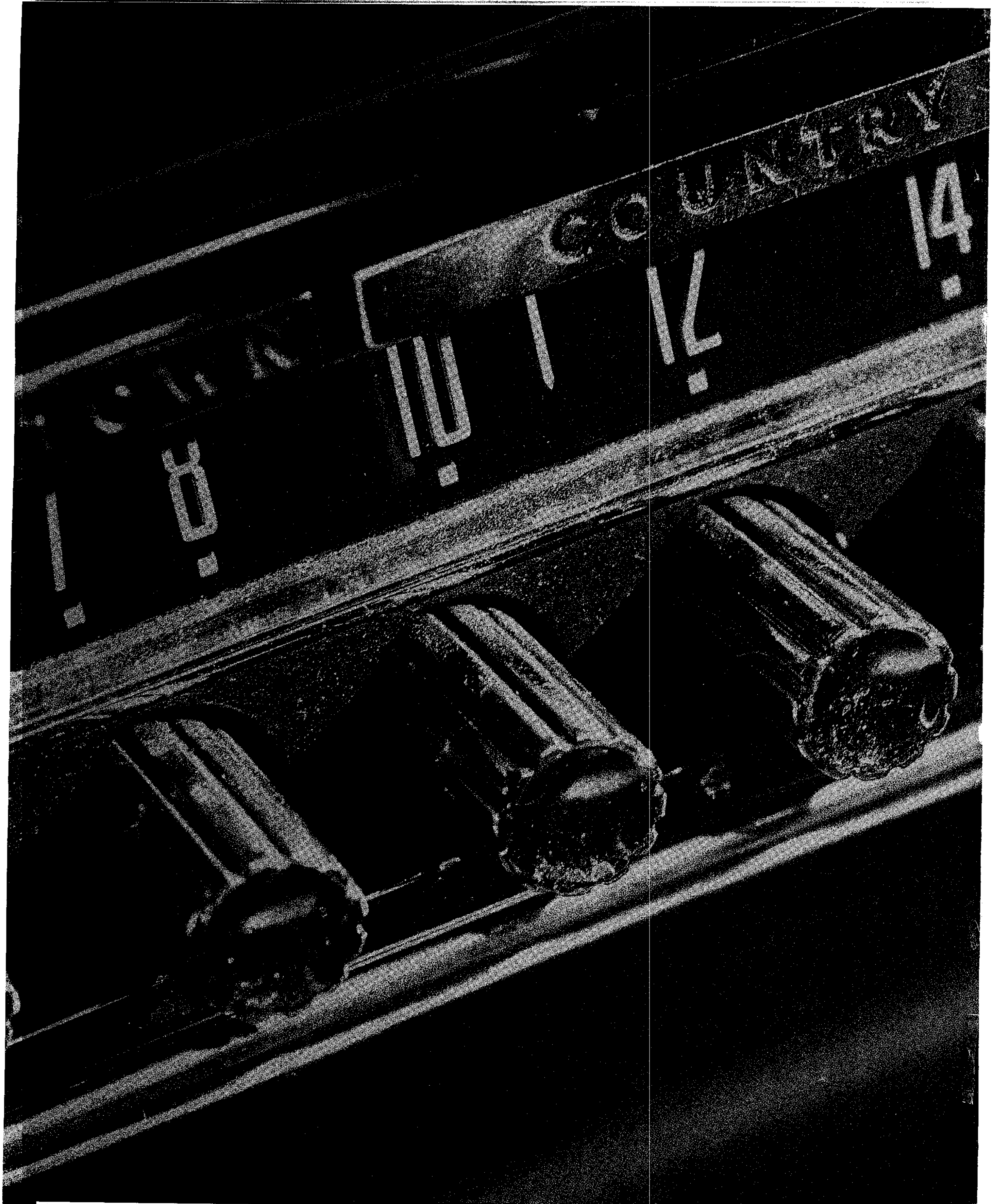

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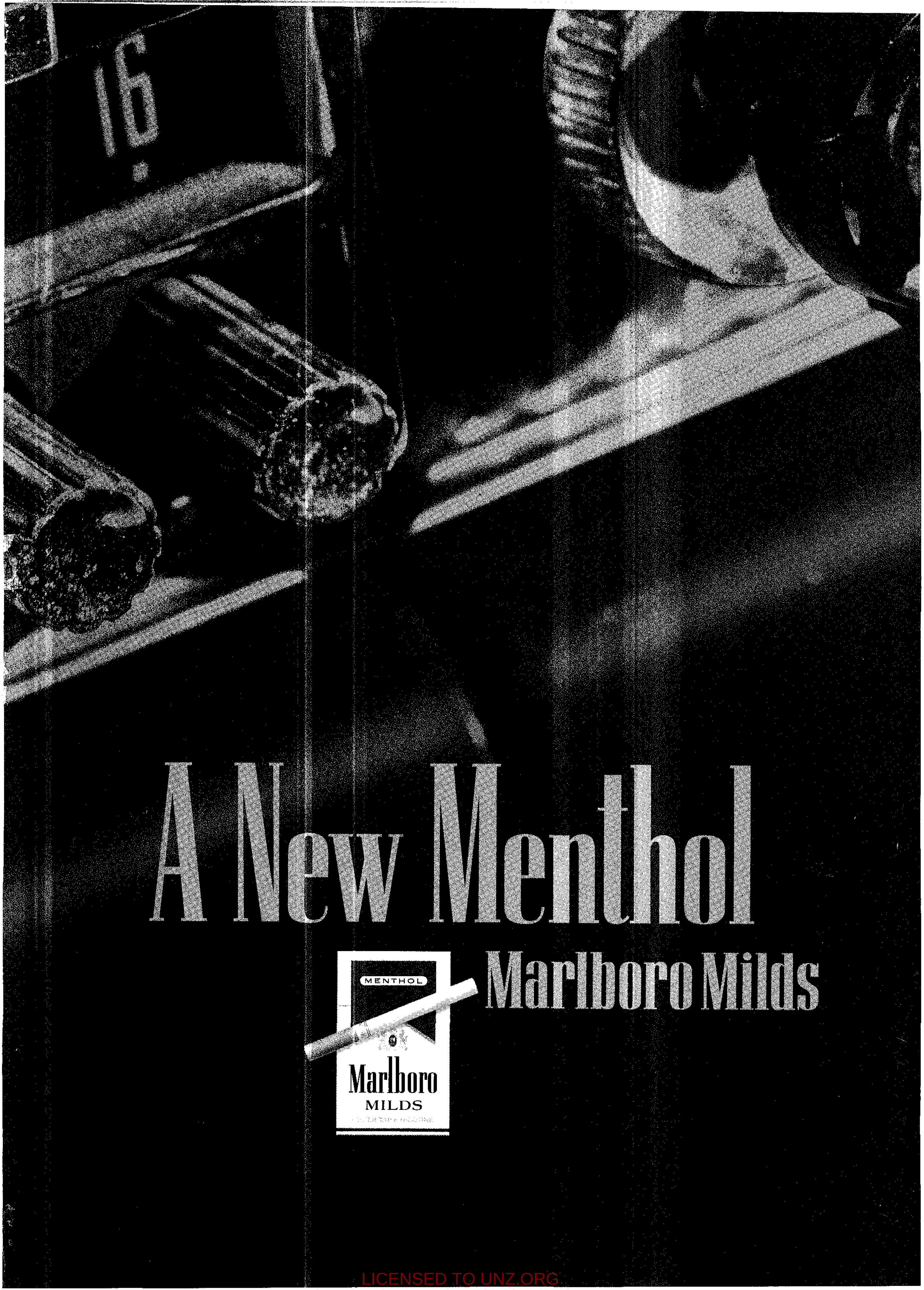
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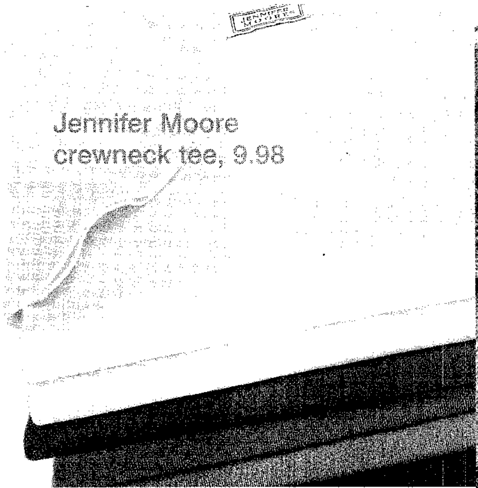
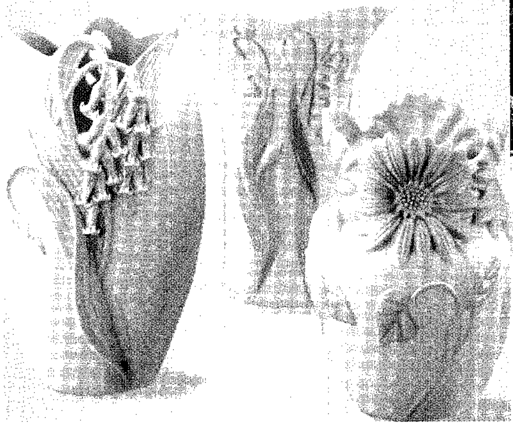
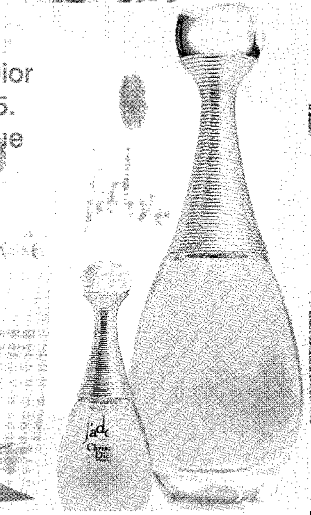


Jennifer Moore crewneck tee, 9.98

Waterford 6th Edition flute pair, $125

Lenox Mother's Day Floral Blossom Collection, 49.99 ea. Reg. 62.50





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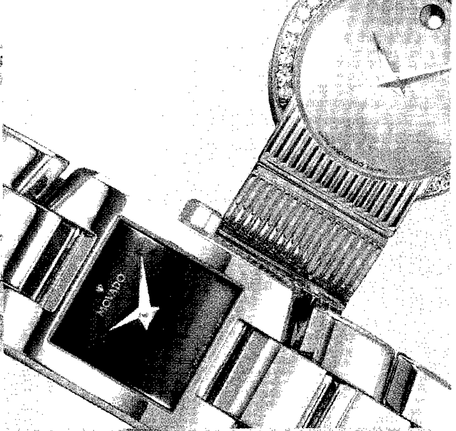
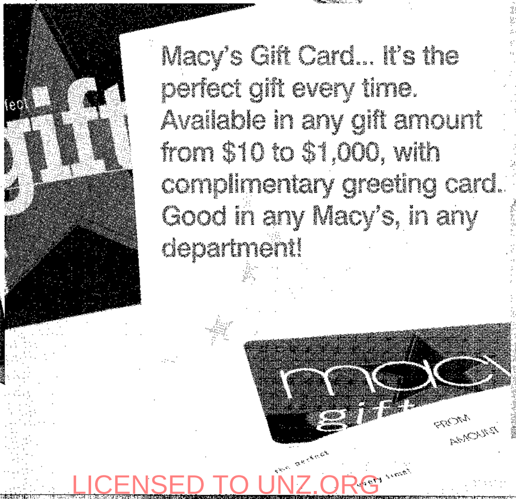


Lenox silverplated heart box, 9.99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> *"Studies have shown that I am more likely to prescribe a drug after its maker takes me to lunch."*
>
> DR. JOHN C. NELSON, PAGE 36

Celexa
citalopram HBr
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36 The Straight Dope? By David D. Kirkpatrick

Two years ago, the antidepressant Celexa was unknown in the U.S. Now, without any clear advantage over its predecessors, it's stealing sales from Prozac, scoring 13 percent of the market. Which raises the question: How do drug-company marketing campaigns—from coffee mugs to meals at Lespinasse, not to mention the funding of major research projects—influence doctors' judgment? A hard look at the hard sell.

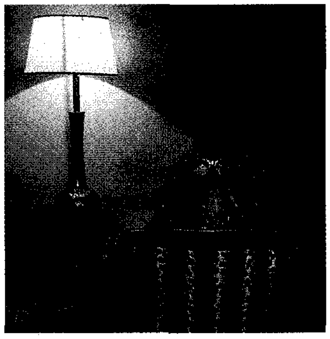
44 Prime Minister By Samuel G. Freedman

Baptist minister Suzan Johnson Cook was tempted by jobs at the White House and Harvard. But she turned both down to tend her flock at Mariners Temple, which she built from a handful of congregants to a stronghold of 1,000 by galvanizing the black middle class in, of all places, Chinatown. Now she's doing it all over again in the Bronx.

50 Funny Business

By Joanne Kaufman

What do the Oscars, the Emmies, the Grammys, and the Tonys have in common? Bruce Vilanch, veteran writer of the gags that levitate awards shows. Now, with his own gig, Vilanch finally gets the last laugh.



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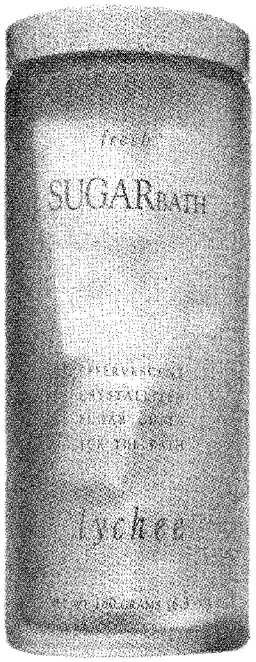

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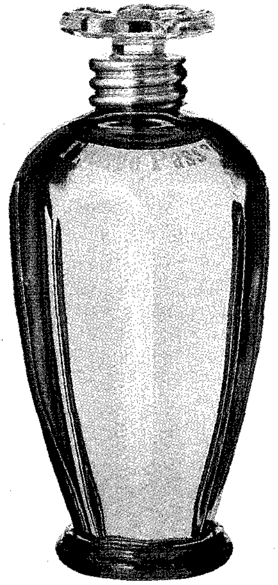

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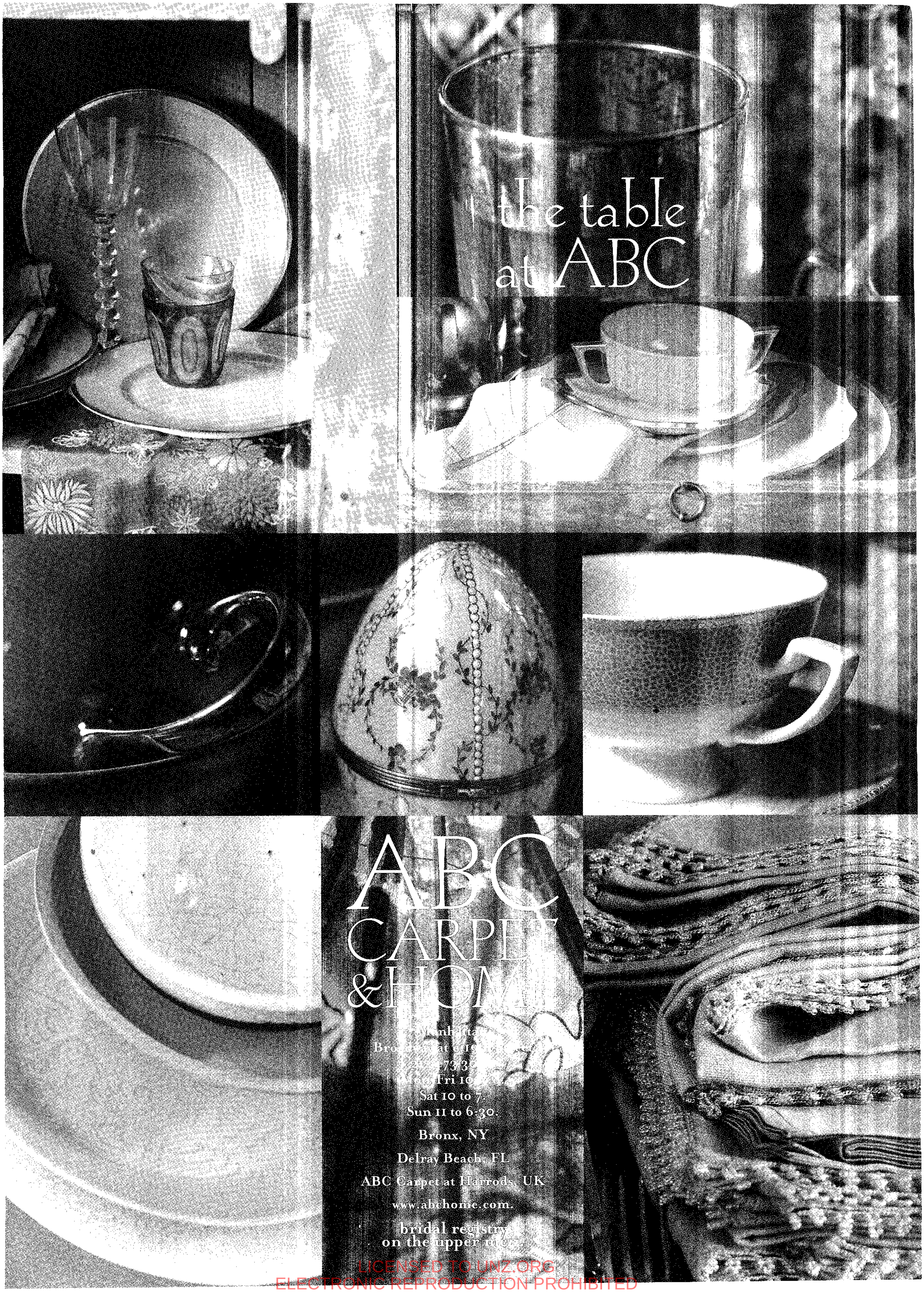
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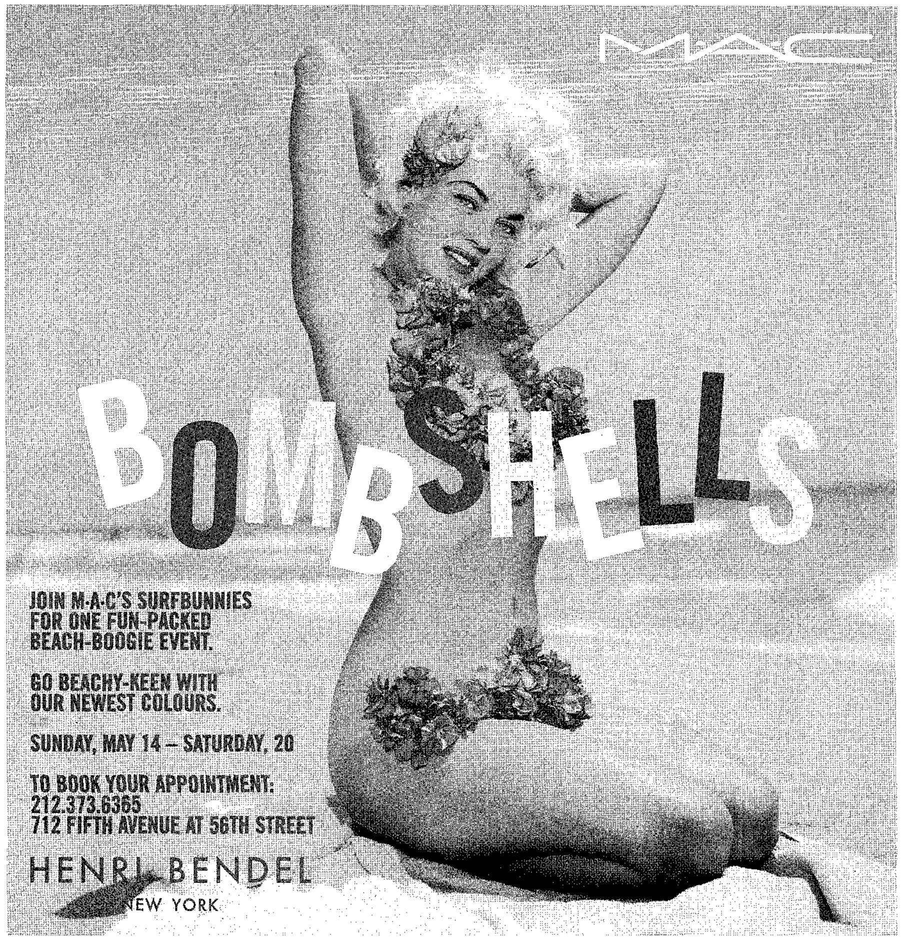

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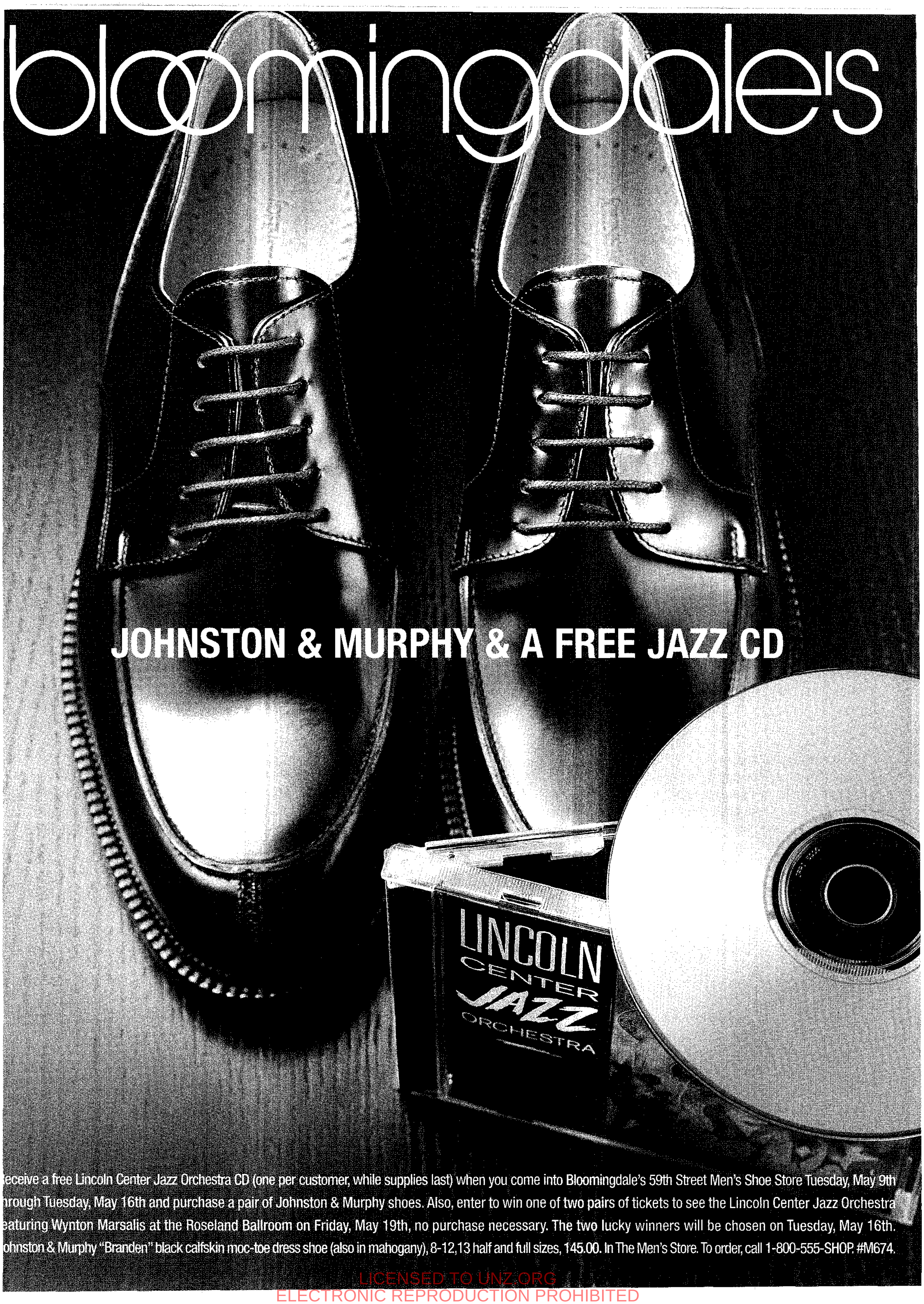
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The Real Thing

Park Slope the way it used to be; the best New York barber and the last great jazz bar; Vicky Ward's not-so-secret admirers.

I AM A BIG FAN OF YOUR ANNUAL "BEST of" issue ["Best of New York," April 24]. However, this time something caught my eye that I can't seem to let go of. I am a native Brooklynite—born in 1976 in Park Slope and recently relocated to Fort Greene. Your description of Dizzy's restaurant as a place "where Park Slope feels most like Park Slope" really threw me for a loop. Dizzy's is a good restaurant; I do go there sometimes. But it does not represent Park Slope to me, or to any of the other old-timers in that part of the neighborhood at all. Perhaps I am holding on to an image of Park Slope that no longer exists, but it's hard to let go of that image when I look at Dizzy's and still see the Park Town Coffee Shop, or "Benny's," as those who bought candy there every day used to call it. I remember watching old Italian and Irish ladies yell up to their families right outside the store as I waited for the bus to take me to school. I remember the dirt, the grease, and the wonderful, unpretentious, unclichéd atmosphere that's a bit hard to come by these days.

Sarah Margon
BROOKLYN

IN YOUR RECENT ISSUE ON NEW YORK'S BEST, you featured Rodney Cutler as the best men's barber. I've never experienced his services, but I can guarantee your readers that the best in New York is Pepe Sanseli at Salon 61 Continental (170 East 61st Street). My friends and I have been flying him to Florida every five weeks for seventeen years, and we are positive that, hands down, he has to be New York's best.

Charles Kalstone, M.D.
CORAL GABLES, FLA.

THANK YOU FOR DANCING ON THE GRAVE OF the last great jazz bar in New York City. Augie's was an institution beloved by its neighborhood following in Morningside Heights. It was an unpretentious place where one could sit at the bar, listen to jazz, and not feel compelled to order anything more fancy than a Heineken. The irony is that, while bad-mouthing the "subpar student jamming at Augie's," you ran a photo of a saxophone player who used to play Augie's regularly on Friday and Saturday nights.

A. Adam Troso
MANHATTAN

IN THE FOOD SECTION OF YOUR "BEST OF New York" issue, you list non-vegetarian vegetarian restaurants, which is sort of like championing pork dishes at kosher restaurants.

Kevin O'Connor
MANHATTAN

Little Respect

I FOUND YOUR APRIL 10 "INTELLIGENCER" column ["Uptown Girl at Discount Price," by Beth Landman Keil and Ian Spiegelman] to be insulting to Billy Joel. You describe him as "the little pianist" and "the gnomish songster"; Billy Joel is one of the most talented and cherished songwriters of our time as well as one of New York's favorite sons. You should get your values straight.

Judy Berger
JERICHO, N.Y.

Pool Cool

THE ANONYMOUS BROKER QUOTED IN CARL Swanson's article about Manhattan's penthouse pools ["Gotham: All Wet," April 17] must have been driven by either petty jealousy or professional incompetence. As one of the residents of the Excelsior penthouse, I can assure you there is no chlorine smell. Furthermore, a sophisticated alarm system warns of leakage before liability can become an issue, and the minimal required maintenance is handled by a corporate service. (We're sad to admit that images of a studly pool boy seducing the lady of the house are far from accurate!) However, the unattributed comment to which I must take greatest exception is that ours is "a small apartment with a big pool." Given that the average size of a single-family home in America is less than 2,000 square feet (and the even punier statistics of Manhattan living spaces), I'm curious how anyone could characterize 4,400 square feet as "small." We couldn't be more pleased with our stunning new home. Frankly, we're enjoying poking fun at this anonymous broker, from poolside (margaritas in hand).

Name Withheld
MANHATTAN

Rock On

IF LYSA COOPER TRULY BELIEVES THAT African-Americans should not wear diamonds, based upon her reasoning that "the diamond mines are what enslaved us back in Africa" ["Gotham Style: Playing the Market," by Maura Egan, April 17], then her logic dictates that African-Americans should avoid cotton clothing and cotton linens. Should we favor cosmetic puffs over cotton balls? Should we forgo sugar in any form? And I guess we don't even need to question the use of tobacco.

Amelia Marshall
STUDIO CITY, CA.

Hey, Vicky!

WE THOUGHT YOUR DEPICTION OF VICKY Ward was one-sided and unfair ["Gotham: Tina Brown's Double Play," by Carl Swanson, May 1]. We have all worked very closely with Vicky at the New York *Post* since she began editing the Living Section over a year ago. She may not coddle her employees, but she is certainly one of the most open-minded, generous, straightforward, and intelligent women with whom we have had the opportunity to work. First of all, Vicky has never changed a quote in any story that we have written or edited. In fact, when a reporter disagreed with any of her edits, she worked with the person to make sure the writer was happy in the end. Vicky is an extremely talented woman, has a keen eye for stories, and is able to push writers to go further and do a better job than even they themselves thought possible. We found her guidance invaluable and know those who worked closely with her feel the same. We will miss her, and we have no doubt that she will thrive at *Talk*. They are lucky to have her.

Leah Ginsberg
Jared Paul Stern
Hallie Levine
Maria Fernandez
MANHATTAN

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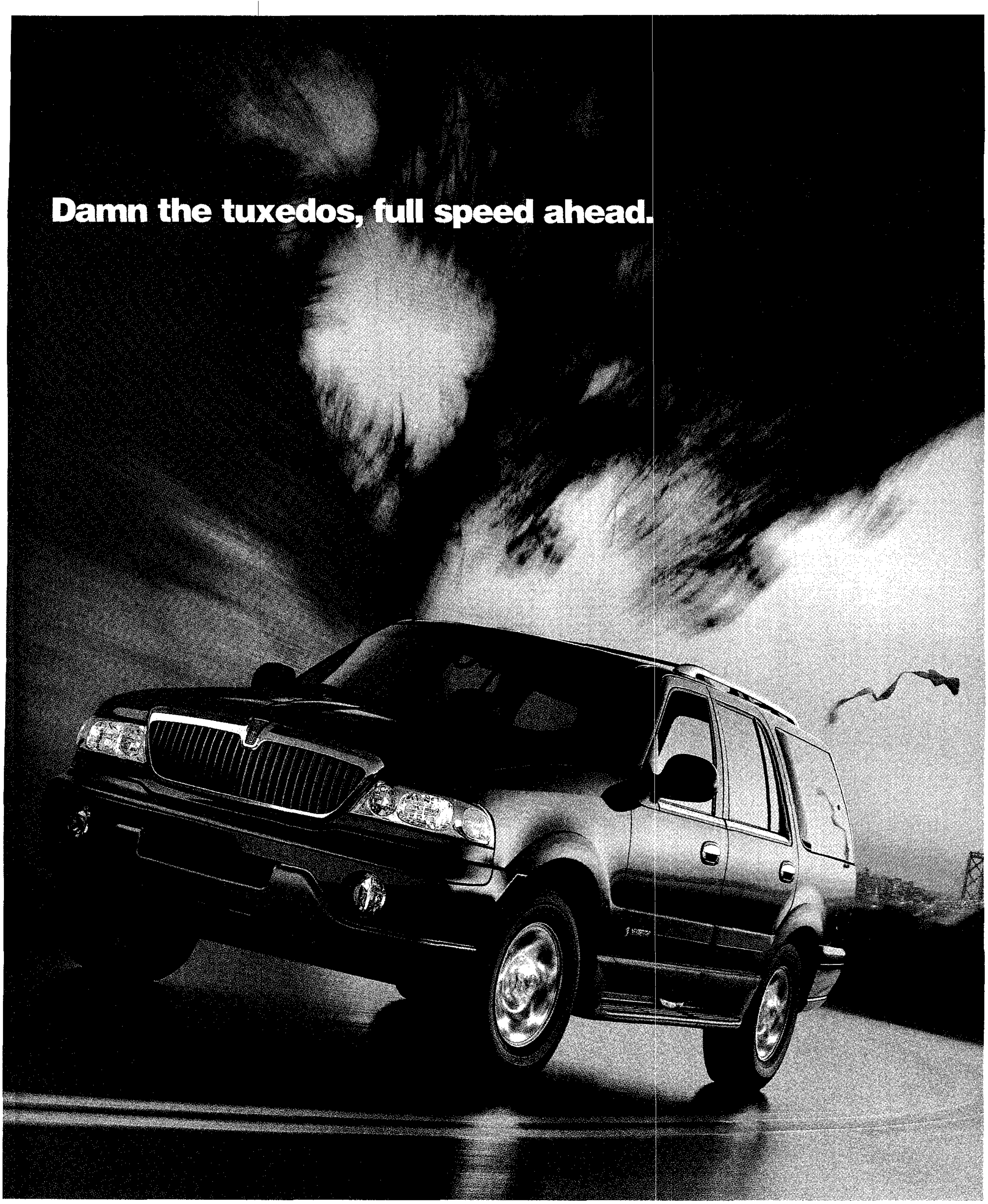

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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL WITH IAN SPIEGELMAN

INTELLIGENCER

FOR SCORSESE, THE GANG'S ALL . . . THERE

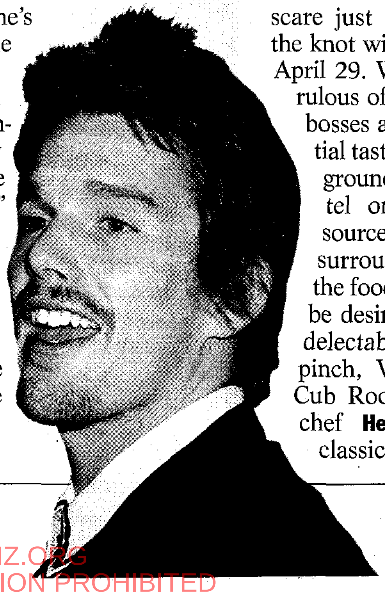
Poor **Martin Scorsese**. Thanks to **Rudy Giuliani**, the city is too clean for the director's latest New York–centric flicks. Scorsese signed on to executive-produce *Deuces Wild*, a low-budget film about Brooklyn gangs during the fifties, because it depicts the gritty New York that is the wellspring of his work. The film, which is being directed by **Scott Kalvert** of *The Basketball Diaries* fame and stars **Matt Dillon** and **Deborah Harry**, was to have been shot in Brooklyn until, reports producer **Michael Cerenzie**, "we looked around and realized there's no 1958 Brooklyn *left* in Brooklyn." So the filmmakers decided to reconstruct the borough's bygone era in . . . Los Angeles. And there's more. Scorsese's latest directorial effort, *Gangs of New York*, a $90 million tale about gang life in New York circa 1850 starring **Leonardo DiCaprio** and **Cameron Diaz**, is being filmed entirely in Rome. This isn't the first time the director has taken creative license with his venues: His 1977 paean to this city, *New York, New York*, was filmed in Los Angeles. The director was behind sealed doors last week, polishing up a script—we can only hope about gangs and New York—and didn't return calls.

ANNA MURDOCH'S OBSTRUCTED VIEW

After being married to **Rupert Murdoch**, you have a right to be a bit particular. Sources say the mogul's ex-wife, **Anna**, was all set to move into a new, 4,100-square-foot condo on the sixteenth floor of the former Westbury hotel at 15 East 69th Street—but took the walk-through with her decorators and decided against checking in. "She was starting a new life in a new condo with her new husband," says one source, referring to septuagenarian financier **William Mann**, whom she married last year. Anna and William currently live in Mann's co-op on Fifth Avenue and 77th Street, and Anna was primed to spend $6.5 million (a mere chip of the at least $150 million she got from Rupert) for the new place. But "the park views were obstructed by the air-conditioning supports for the penthouse," says one broker familiar with the building. "And the ceilings had been dropped to accommodate the ductwork upstairs." The penthouse's apparently extensive cooling systems seemed to have gotten Murdoch steamed enough to back out—although another source said that it was Mann who preferred his previous prewar pad. Messages left with Ms. Murdoch's office at the Murdoch Family Foundation and the sales office for the Westbury were not returned. But nobody's going to lose money here: Several other Westbury buyers have resold for more money; and for $7.75 million, you can get Murdoch's cast-off digs.

BABIES LOWER BOOM ON THEATER GROUP

Parenthood spelled doom for one New York acting troupe. At the premiere of *Hamlet* last week, the film's star, **Ethan Hawke** (pictured), said that he's officially shut down the Malaparte Theater Company—which he founded in the nineties with a group of actors including **Steve Zahn**—to devote more time to **Maya Ray**, his 22-month-old daughter with **Uma Thurman**. "I had to choose between my commitment to staging important avant-garde projects and my baby," he says, "and the baby won." Fortunately, Zahn wasn't too heartbroken at the news: "Steve agreed immediately because he just had a baby, too [in April]," Hawke says. But Hawke hasn't given up the stage completely. The actor says he's planning to star in *Ten Unknowns*, the latest play by **Jon Robin Baitz**, which has already piqued the interest of **Jason Robards** and **Julianna Margulies** and is slated to debut at Lincoln Center Theater in February 2001. Of the dissolution of his beloved troupe, Hawke summed up, "Everyone else started saying that they were having kids, also. It's just that time of life for everyone." Could the cast of *Friends* please hurry up and reach that time of their lives?



BOB WEINSTEIN'S PRENUPTIAL JITTERS

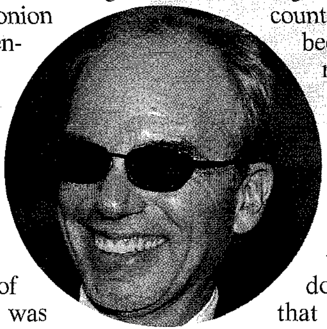
Bob Weinstein had a curious scare just days before tying the knot with **Annie Clayton** on April 29. When the less garrulous of the two Miramax bosses attended a prenuptial tasting at the wedding grounds, the Regent Hotel on Wall Street, a source says, he loved the surroundings but found the food left something to be desired. Looking for a delectable solution in a pinch, Weinstein phoned Cub Room and City Hall chef **Henry Meer**, whose classic American dishes

Photographs: top, Mitch Gerber/Corbis; bottom, Henry McGee/Globe Photos.

have made the movie mogul a repeat diner, and asked him to prepare the wedding dinner. Despite such short notice, Meer says the evening went off swimmingly, with such guests as brother-cum-best man **Harvey**, **Wes Craven**, and erstwhile Miramax muse **Quentin Tarantino** scarfing down his sweet-onion tarts and potato-encrusted snapper. When asked about Weinstein's personal response to his cooking, Meer turned modest. "I saw [Weinstein] at the end of the party, and he was just ecstatic," he says, "but that's probably because he married such a great woman."

BILLY BOB: PUSHING TUNES

Guess who's looking to be a rock-and-roll star? Actor-director-writer **Billy Bob Thornton** is adding yet another endeavor to his résumé. In the grand tradition of fellow thespians **Bruce Willis**, **Eddie Murphy**, and **Keanu Reeves**, Thornton has been in the studio working on an album. Though he's been recording in Nashville, it promises to be more rock than country. Not surprisingly, amour **Angelina Jolie** has been by his side in the studio all those late nights while he's laying down the tracks. Making their own sweet music, no doubt.



ANGRY DIVAS ADD TO MICROSOFT WOES

It's rough being a diva these days. A group of female computer pros known online as the "Digital Divas" (at digitaldivas.com) has fired off an angry cease-and-desist letter to software giant Microsoft, which just launched a new Website with its very own "Digital Diva," **Stacy Elliott** (digitaldiva.com). Elliott's job is to explain high-tech innovations and jargon to the non-digerati, but the original divas say they've been doing exactly that for nearly three years. The women accuse the beleaguered behemoth of trademark infringement and confusing the public with its nearly identical Web address and services. Spokesdiva **Faith Kaminsky** charges Microsoft is trying to capitalize on the organization's hard work and says the company hasn't responded to their letter, which was mailed on April 25. Kaminsky says the group is raising money to sue. "We've spent years building a reputation for doing what [Elliott] does," she grumbles. "Microsoft just ignored it." Perhaps it's had bigger things to worry about recently.

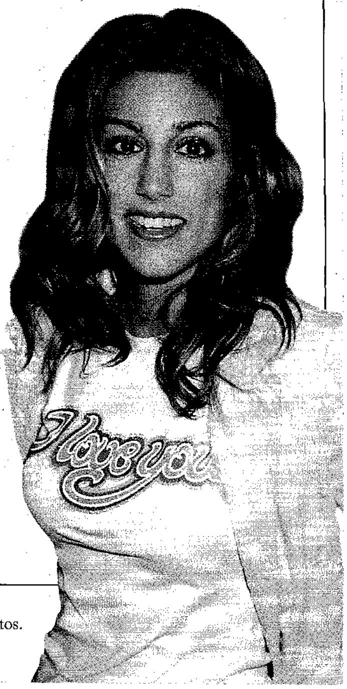
TIGHT SQUEEZE ON PUFFY FLICK

Jennifer Esposito got into her latest movie role with the help of a team of dressers and a whole lot of masking tape. Last week, on her first day of shooting *Made* with **Sean "Puffy" Combs**, **Vince Vaughn**, and **Jon Favreau**, costumers presented Esposito with an outfit so form-fitting it took three people to squeeze her into it. At the launch party for the 21 de Cartier wristwatch, the actress told us, "They taped my breasts together. They taped my blouse to my stomach and my boots to my legs because my pants kept riding up. Then they had to tape the microphone to my body because there was no place else to put it." But the real fun came when it was time to remove the ensemble: "I lost two layers of skin in one day of filming," she said, laughing. Vince Vaughn had no such costume trouble, since he spent most of his day shooting a scene in which he lounges in a bubble bath. Esposito told us that Jon Favreau burst onto the set, took one look at Vaughn, and announced, "You look like a lemon-meringue pie with a big head sticking out of it!"

CANNES JOB: Class trips sure have improved. Audrey Cohen College, a small not-for-profit school in TriBeCa best known for its subway advertisements, is sending fourteen MBA candidates in its media-management program to the Cannes Film Festival as a *class requirement*. The Young Turks-to-be will be guided through the glitz by **Stephen R. Greenwald**, the former CEO of DeLaurentiis Entertainment Group—and current president of the college—who will help set up meetings with well-heeled investors and other Hollywood bigwigs with the ability to make things happen. And you thought the Ivy League had all the power.

Additional reporting by Carl Swanson, David Amsden, and Suny Sehgal.

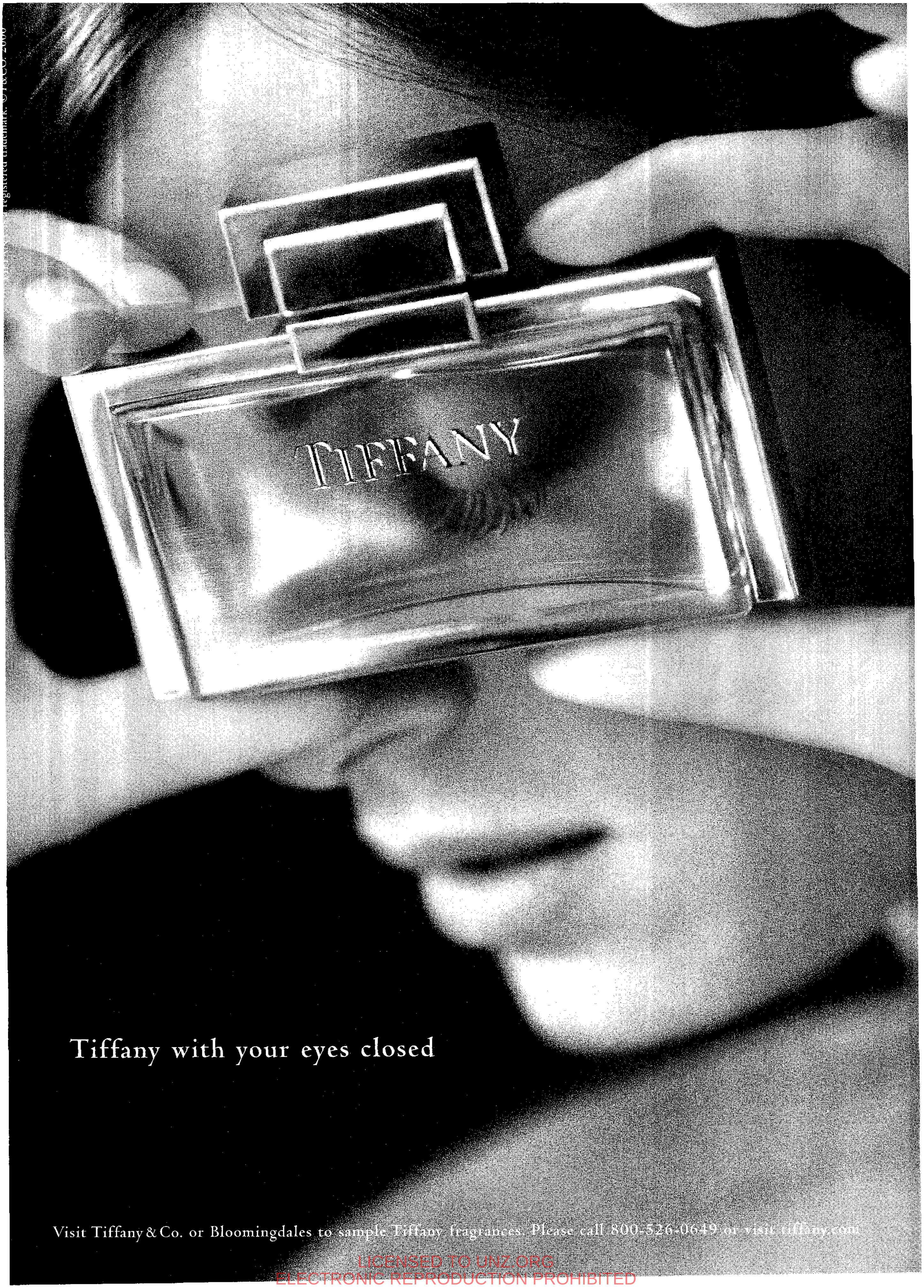
Jennifer Esposito:
The tale of the tape



WARHOL STARLET: DEAD WOMAN STALKING?

By all accounts, Valerie Solanas, the woman who shot Andy Warhol in 1968, has been dead since 1989—but try telling that to one of the artist's surviving ingenues. Actress **Geraldine Smith**, who appeared in Warhol's *Bad* (1977), insists not only that Solanas is still among the living but that the radical feminist is trying to kill her. According to Smith, Solanas always thought she should have gotten the *Bad* role because she believed Warhol got the story idea from her SCUM (Society for Cutting Up Men) Manifesto. Now, Smith says, Solanas has returned to New York and "is paying to have me bumped off." The actress explains, "Right after I saw her [in a crowd] a year ago, I got hit dead-on by a bike messenger who swerved into me and then pedaled off." Smith—who recently finished shooting *R. Christmas* with director **Abel Ferrara**—says the run-in left her leg broken in eight places, adding, "I'm sure the guy meant to do it." Just when she was able to walk again four months later, Smith says, she was struck from behind by a hit-and-run car, breaking her arm. "The police just officially closed the case, but they warned me it was suspicious," she says. Valerie Solanas was, not surprisingly, unavailable for comment.

Photographs: top, Lisa Rose/Globe Photos; bottom, Henry McGee/Globe Photos.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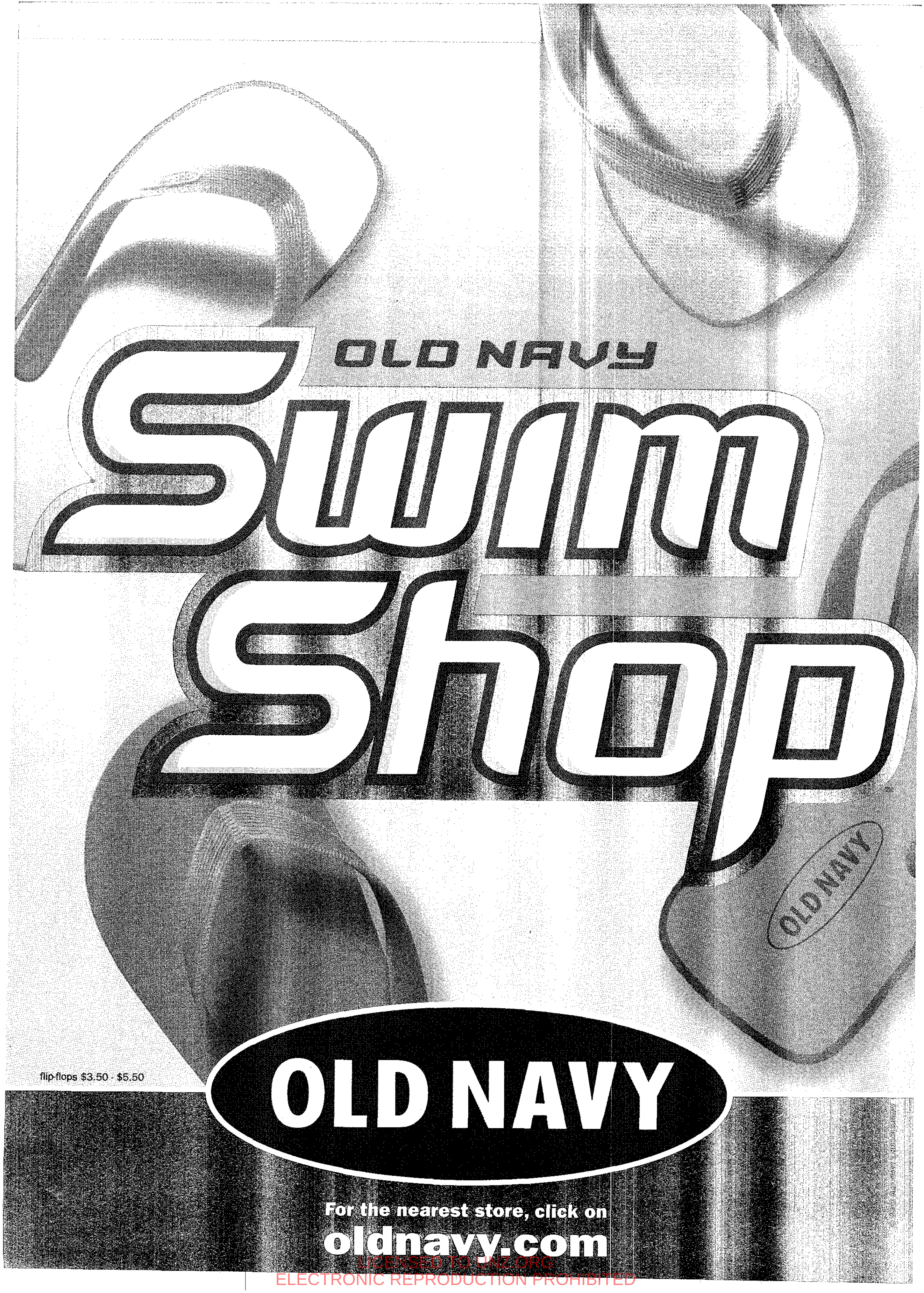
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WHAT OTHER RELIGION DO WE NEED?—*AYN RAND*

GOTHAM

Cardinal Virtues

Ed Koch remembers a friendship that transcended religion and politics.

I FIRST MET THE CARDINAL SHORTLY AFTER he became archbishop in 1984. I was part of the group that assembled in St. Patrick's to welcome him at his first homily. He stood up there, and at some point, he got this funny look and looked over this audience of 3,000 people—all the power brokers in the city—and he said, "How'm I doin'?" And after the laughter subsided, he said, "I'm asking the mayor of Scranton!" Well, of course, that endeared him to me right away.

We started having dinners together, about six a year, half of them at the cardinal's residence, half of them at Gracie Mansion. Breakfasts were more frequent and informal. For breakfast at the rectory, they'd have eggs and potatoes, bacon, tomatoes, but the cardinal wouldn't eat that. Every day he just ate cold cereal. He wasn't a man for luxuries. I worried about him sometimes—he was a workaholic and a chronic insomniac. He didn't take care of himself.

In time we became friends—not that we didn't have arguments. Of course, with the Catholic Church, they all centered around sex. He fought my administration on condoms in schools and on abortion. A month after I became mayor, I issued an executive order to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in government, housing, and education. Later, we resolved that no one doing business with the city would be allowed to discriminate, either. The cardinal said to me, "You can't issue an order that is binding on the Church. We're exempt." I said, "No, Cardinal, you're *not* exempt." And he said, "We're gonna sue you." It was the first of many lawsuits. We disagreed intensely on homosexuality, on abortion, on other things. The bottom line was, for him, these were sins. I disagree, but how could I persuade someone who believes it's a sin? But I believe that over time he came, not to change, but to be more accepting. He wasn't a man who hated.

REMEMBERING O'CONNOR

I'll tell you when we really became close. One afternoon, I was called to Bellevue after a cop, Stephen McDonald, was shot. His spine was broken. The doctors told me he was dying. His family, his in-laws, his wife—this scared young woman—were all praying for him downstairs. I was overwhelmed. I wept. I called the cardinal and said, "Your Eminence, I've never done this before. But I need you. This young cop is dying. His family is very religious, and they need comfort. Could you come over?" He said, "I'll be right there." And he came down and comforted the family and embraced me until I composed myself. That night, we saw one another revealed. I don't like people to see me crying. But with him I wasn't ashamed. It felt right.

After that, he was always there when I was troubled. In 1986, after the corruption crisis, I really thought about killing myself. I was clinically depressed, in such emotional pain I can hardly describe it. I couldn't get out of bed. Then, one Sunday morning, the cardinal called. He said, "Listen, Ed, I know that you feel terrible. I just want you to know that nobody blames you. Everyone knows you're an honest man. And I want you to know that you're in my prayers." And I said, "Your Emi- ➤

Photograph from Bettmann/Corbis.

Virtues *continued from page 17*

nence, I can't tell you how much I appreciate this call. It means so much to me." He said, "No, not at all." I said, "Oh, yes, Your Eminence. You don't understand how important it is . . . I mean, the *Lubavitcher Rebbe* didn't call me."

I'm a very proud Jew, but the cardinal came to be my mentor in spiritual matters. On many issues, his integrity and sense of what's right and wrong became my guide. Even after I was no longer mayor, our friendship continued. The night I lost to David Dinkins, my family came back with me to Gracie Mansion. It was a little after midnight. And suddenly, there was the cardinal. The cops didn't even call in to announce him. He just walked in. He also came to the shiva when my brother died. Compassion was his greatest gift.

The last time I saw him was a few days before Christmas. I went by his house with a gift, the face of the Madonna from the Pietà, which I bought for him at the Met. I knocked on the door and told the housekeeper that I would leave it with her. But the cardinal insisted I come in. He was dining with a dozen friends from his days at the seminary. He seemed energetic and very happy. I never saw him again.

When I had my stroke in 1987, I asked him to officiate at my funeral if I died, even though it would be a Jewish ceremony. He said he would. What shocked me after he got sick was the realization that this vital, irrepressible guy wouldn't outlive me after all. I'm not a very religious man, but toward the end I prayed every day, asking that he be saved. I loved him.

As told to Maer Roshan

REMEMBERING O'CONNOR

Stephen Dubner recalls the cardinal as a peacemaker—between him and his mom.

JOHN CARDINAL O'CONNOR WAS A man who liked to fix things, and since I had a broken relationship—with my mother—I went to see him.

My mother revered the cardinal, thought he stood for everything that was righteous and true about Catholicism, everything that had led her to convert from Judaism more than 50 years earlier.

I was a different matter. I had let my mother down, grievously. The youngest of eight children, I was her last, best hope for the priesthood. I had taken my altar-boy duties seriously; I tried in every way to believe as my parents believed, which was deeply. My father was also a Jewish convert, and you must believe me when I say that it would be hard to find a more zealous pair of Catholics than these two former Brooklyn Jews.

Not only did I not become a priest, but I became . . . a Jew. My mother thought this preposterous. To her, Judaism was an outmoded religion whose only contribution had been to preserve monotheism until Christ came along.

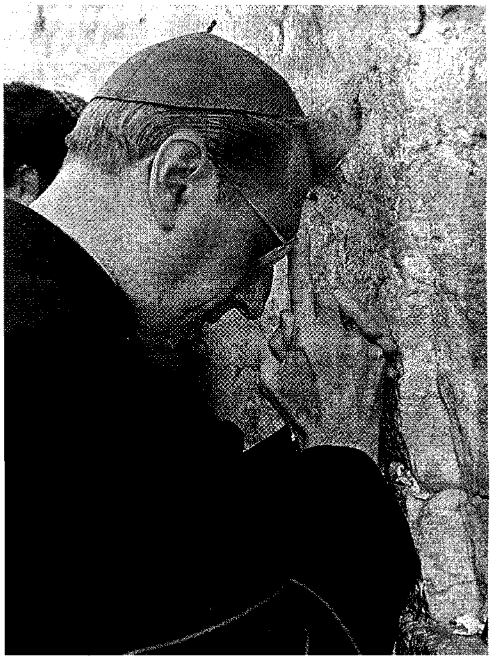
We fought, stewed, then stumbled into a prickly silence. That's when I went to see the cardinal.

This was four years ago, and he was still strong. His desk was immaculate, his in-box empty. On his lapel he wore a small red-rose pin, the same pro-life symbol my mother favored. I told him about our dilemma. "I don't mean to turn this into a shrink session or a confessional," I said, "but how would you suggest that we go about resolving that conflict?"

He listened hard; you would have thought he was considering a matter far more momentous than one family's theological dispute. "I think in two ways," he finally answered. "First off, I would look at recent declarations of Pope John Paul II about the validity of Judaism. This has radically changed Jewish-Catholic dialogue. Radically." His second point concerned "the primacy of an informed conscience"—that is, the Vatican's belief that if someone has duly educated himself in the ways of the Church and the ways of another faith, and feels that God wants him to belong to that other faith, that is where he indeed belongs. The cardinal told me I should go to my mother and tell her "that this is where you think God wants you to be, an informed Jew."

This was what the cardinal's friends always said: For all his power and wit, what he loved more than anything was being a priest. Having eyes that see, ears that hear, and a tongue unafraid to deliver the verdict.

I told my mother about our conversation; she sent the cardinal a thank-you note. She also started talking to me differently. Little by little we built a peace—an odd and often delicate peace, but one that we were both grateful for, since her health was fading.



By the time she died, a few months ago, we had reconciled. We were not so much Catholic and Jew as mother and son, and for that I had John Cardinal O'Connor to thank. I wrote to tell him so and he wrote back, promptly as always, even though by now his own health was worsening.

At my mother's wake, the parish priest, Father Connelly, approached me. "I've read all about you and your mother and the cardinal," he said. "I thought maybe you'd like to recite the mourner's Kaddish after the mass?"

The following day, at the grave site, Father Connelly distributed photocopies of the mourner's Kaddish. It is known as the Jewish prayer for the dead but it is essentially an exaltation of God—quite like the Lord's Prayer, in fact. And I suspect it may be spoken over the cardinal's tomb as well in years to come.

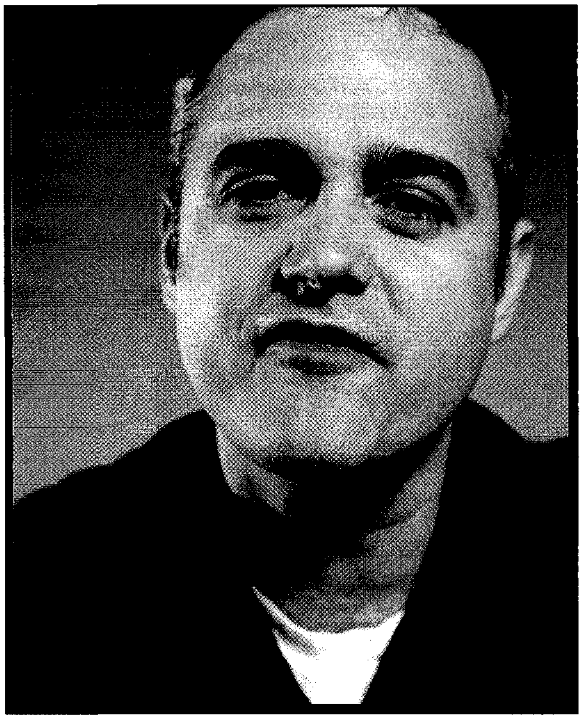
STEPHEN J. DUBNER

Photographs: left, Haviv/Saba; right, Reuters/Corbis.

THEATER

The Toxic Avenger

Blake Nelson takes to the stage—to read poems about his ex-girlfriend.



BLAKE NELSON IS A LITTLE WORried about how the dramatic reading of his 139-poem cycle will go over. The poems, which memorialize his anger at an ex-girlfriend who dumped him, typically go something like this: "I'd kill to fuck you once more / It's fucking sick! / I will not be returning / Your calls." He wrote his enraged epic in one seven-hour sitting after breaking up with a girl in Portland, Oregon, in 1995, and left it in a box until he decided earlier this year to read it on WKCR, the Columbia University radio station. Simon Hammerstein, the 22-year-old scion of the Hammerstein theater family, happened to be at the station and decided to turn the poems into a one-man show, *Ache*, which opens May 11 with Nelson reading at the Flea theater in TriBeCa.

"All I can think of is that if Naomi Wolf hears about this, I'm dead," says Nelson, 34. A small-press friend who looked at the manuscript told him, "If we published this, *we'd* be dead and your career would be over." But the Hammerstein boy and his friends aren't bothered: "They're in their twenties," Nelson explains, "and haven't internalized the politics of calling a girl a cunt, like people ten years older have." Nelson, on the other hand, is "sort of worried that we'll come out and the room will be full of jocks shouting, 'You give it to her!' "

He's not telling his parents. "This would be the first thing I wouldn't want them to see," he says. And the girl? "I only dated her for two months—of course. She was the wildest girl in Portland." At the time, *Girl*, Nelson's first novel, had just been published. "When you have a good book out and it's selling and the movie people are calling—I guess you think you're Superman. And I couldn't even keep one grungy punk-rock girl!" He says they're friends now, though he notes that "if this was getting a lot of attention, I think she'd feel funny." His new girlfriend, he says, thinks *Ache* is "going to make me a star."

That doesn't mean she has any illusions about him. "I said, 'Isn't it interesting that I'm not like that now?' " Nelson recalls. "And she said, 'That poem *is* you. You're totally like that.' That scared me to death." But if the women in his life have accepted that he could whine, "I went down on you / . . . So give me head / You selfish bitch!" he's not sure how others will react. "Are you dating anyone?" he asks. "Well, don't bring her. CARL SWANSON

POLITICS

Campaign-Trail Traffic Report

Chickgate! Pictures of Hizzoner and "very good friend" Judith Nathan appear in, of all places, the *Post*! Further evidence that he won't run? Maybe, but this ain't Washington. Might not hurt him that much. ○

Conservatives name their man—former Westchester rep Joe DioGuardi, who announced his challenge to *Times* four days after mayor's cancer news. Wasn't this the week people were supposed to be *nice* to the guy? ○

Hill completes tour of all 62 counties, winding up, natch, in Clinton County. Big cred for visiting burgs where many voters have never even seen a Senate candidate. Doesn't mean she'll carry them. ○

Sticks it to political parasite Lenora Fulani at Independence Party forum. Import likely lost on all but insiders; nevertheless, a gutsy move, especially juxtaposed with Rudy's kowtowing to her at same event. ●

MEDIA

Nets Snub NARAL

THREE MIDDLE-AGED men in suits follow a 15-year-old girl everywhere she goes, making all her choices for her: which soda to buy, which TV show to watch, which dress to try on. "You wouldn't want some old guys in Washington to make choices for you," a woman's voice suggests. "Why let them make the most important choice of all? Fight for your right to a safe and legal abortion . . . while you still have it." The 30-second spot by DeVito/Verdi advertising is the latest installment in a campaign seen on buses and subways over the past few years, with one big difference: The Pro-Choice Public Education Project, the alliance of NARAL, Planned Parenthood, the Ms. Foundation, and other groups that paid for the ads, can't get them on the air. The four major networks rejected the ad based on a long-held policy of not running issue-based ads—but that policy has been bent in recent years. The Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation's "Life: What a Beautiful Choice" ads popped up on network-owned-and-operated stations around the country in the mid-nineties, as have pro-life ads by Gary Bauer's Focus on the Family group, sometimes after more provocative images have been trimmed out upon request. "Each owned-and-operated station sets up its own standards and practices concerning these ads," says an NBC spokesperson. "You have to wonder whether we would have gotten them in if we hadn't used the word *abortion*," says project director Marion Sullivan. "It's frustrating. I mean, it's only been the law of the land for 30 years." ROBERT KOLKER

Photographs: top, Michael Schmelling; bottom left, Frances M. Roberts; right, Richard B. Levine.

BRAND X

Me First

BRAND: sonicnet.com **AGENCY:** Dale Pon Advertising (NY) **CREATIVE DIRECTORS:** Dale Pon and Maria Raissis

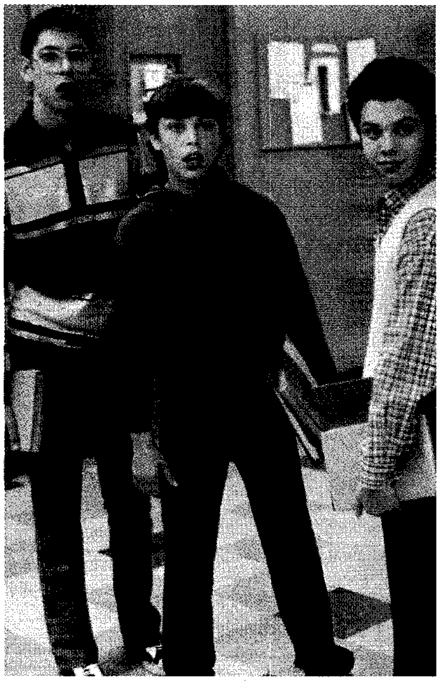
If sonicnet.com's new "Me Music" commercials prompt a certain sense of déjà vu, it's intentional. The online music portal's suddenly omnipresent campaign borrows from and pays homage to MTV's marketing masterstroke, those eighties "I want my MTV" spots. (In fact, Dale Pon created both campaigns.) In the sonicnet spots, everyone from k. d. lang to Sisqó sings, simply, "*Meeeee!*" with varying degrees of melody and finesse. Three dozen spots, featuring 36 artists, were shot, which means there's a good chance one of *your* favorite artists will eventually pop up. There's wit, too, in the unlikely juxtaposition of talent within the individual spots (Buckcherry paired with Christina Aguilera and Yo-Yo Ma; Isaac Hayes paired with Blink-182 and Sheryl Crow). And then, of course, there's the blessedly succinct tag line, which is actually a pretty good brand-positioning statement: Sonicnet.com really *does* offer "me music," with an online database of music information and sound samples as diverse and idiosyncratic as the musicians in these spots. Ultimately, though, the campaign is a way for sonicnet, newly acquired by the MTVi Group, to announce its major-player status: "Who's willing to shill for us? *Absolutely everybody!*" Calvin Klein has long had a lock on that marketing tactic. Now, instead of jeans, we get musicians selling . . . music. A campaign that has inner logic and lets self-promoting artists do what comes naturally? Sounds good. SIMON DUMENCO

TELEVISION

Freaks Show

Two hundred former high-school misfits mourn a beloved program.

Whoever said history is written by the winners never watched *Freaks and Geeks,* NBC's bittersweet comedy-drama about burnouts and brains trying to survive a 1980 Michigan high school. Sure, the show about bullied misfits was itself shoved around—from what creator Paul Feig calls the Saturday–at–8 P.M. "death slot" to Monday nights and, finally, cancellation after twelve episodes. But on a recent Saturday and Sunday afternoon, 200 fans whose memories of high school owe more to *Square Pegs* than to *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* packed into a Museum of Television and Radio theater to watch the six hour-long shows that never aired.



Most of those in the auditorium were the kind of smart, shy twenty- or thirtysomethings you'd see at a Pavement concert—it's safe to say none of them had been captain of his high-school football team. Indeed, *Freaks and Geeks* won a dedicated following by turning the humiliations of high school—the wedgies! the swirlies! the towel-snapping savagery of it all!—into nostalgic comedy without easy answers or upbeat endings. "The show touched on my experiences perfectly—me and my friends played Dungeons & Dragons," said 33-year-old Keith Lyle. "Things you were embarrassed about, this sort of validates them." One of the few fans to experience high school contemporaneously with the program, a 15-year-old from Woodstock, barely suppressed a sigh when she said the show was "painfully true."

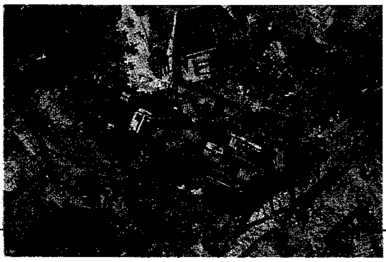
These days, every canceled cult favorite has a Website, but only *Freaks and Geeks* fans bought a full-page ad in *Variety* urging another network to pick up the program. Feig, who flew in from Los Angeles at his own expense to speak on Saturday, received a standing ovation. After asking, "How many of the Website people are out there?," he told them their support had helped keep *Freaks* on the air as long as it was. "Without you," he said, "we could've been *Wonderland*!"

During a brief Q&A session before everyone settled down to six straight hours of television, a fan asked about Feig's inspiration for a scene in which a character unintentionally streaks through school; Feig replied that the incident was loosely based on a gym-shower "dog pile" he suffered in his own high school. "I was a stand-up comic for years," Feig said later, "and if you tell a story about something terrible that happened to you, it's always funny." Most high-school shows, he said, "are about getting laid. We were too busy getting our asses kicked." ROBERT LEVINE

ARTBYNUMBERS

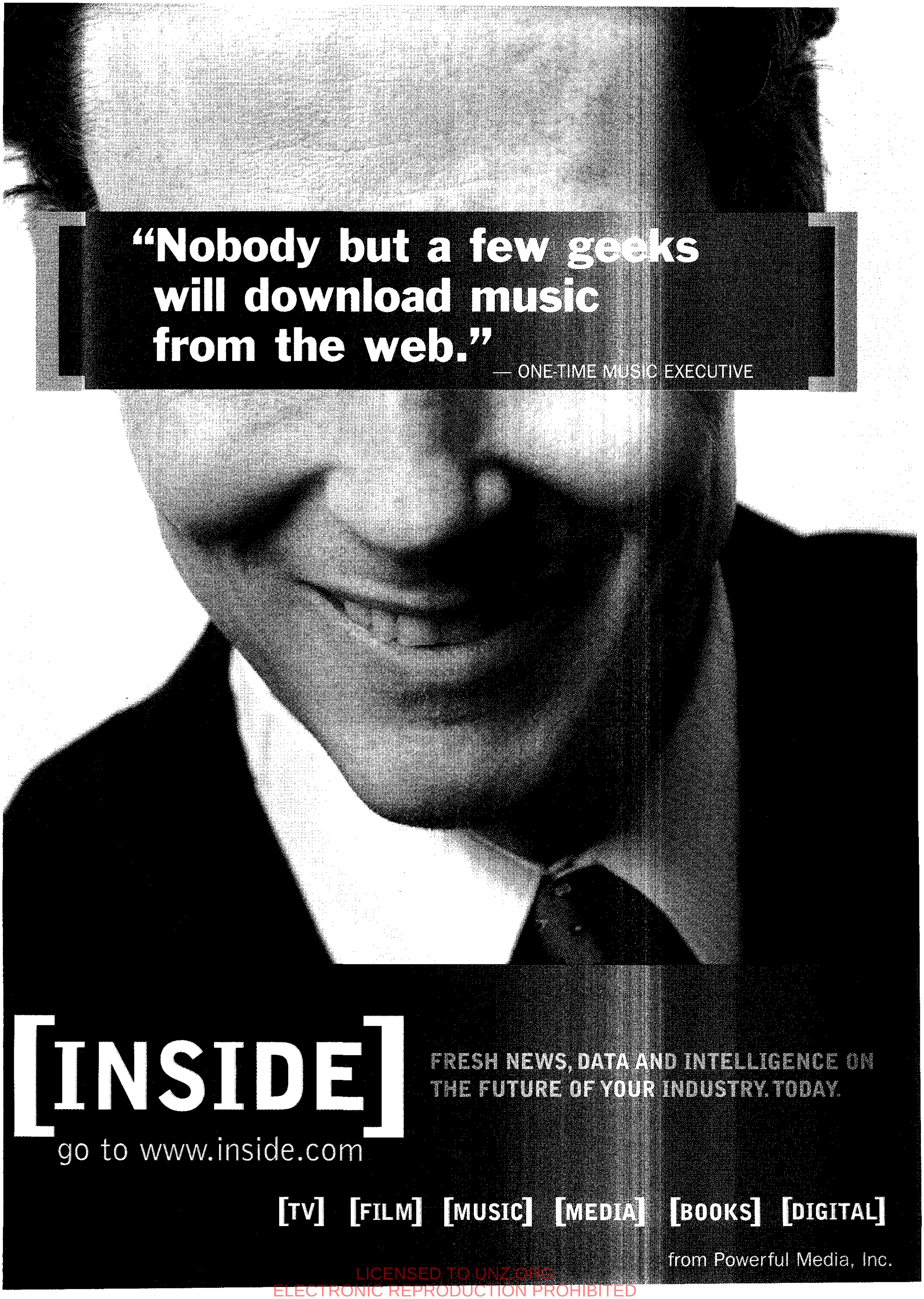
Piece by Piece

Shows like the Whitney Biennial can do a lot for an unknown artist's reputation—and, in this economy, his bankbook. In the months since his selection, the 56-year-old artist Al Souza, who trained as an engineer and splits his time between Texas and Massachusetts, has been swamped with interest—and sales. About 45 of Souza's jigsaw-puzzle paintings from the past two years have been snapped up at prices from $2,000 to $14,000, about 20 percent more than he was used to getting. *The Peaceful Kingdom,* on view at the Whitney, has been reserved by the museum at a price tag of $50,000. Souza's recent show at the Moody Gallery in Houston sold out, and within a week of the mid-April arrival of his new works at the Charles Cowles Gallery, where he will show next season for the first time in New York since 1994, three of five pieces had already been spoken for. JOSH BAER



More art-world news can be found online at **www.baerfaxt.com.**

Photograph from the Neal Peters Collection.



"Nobody but a few geeks will download music from the web." — ONE-TIME MUSIC EXECUTIVE

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GOTHAM REALESTATE

REALTY BITES

Glass Houses

Howard Roark never worried about resale.

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN HARD TO SELL ARchitectural heroism to Manhattan's millionaires, whose tastes tend to run more toward lacquered preservationism. "Most people who are in the market," says Stribling's Tim Desmond, "want traditional details." That's why it took two years to unload Paul Rudolph's intricately renovated house at 23 Beekman Place (Sotheby's Fred Williams sold it for $5.5 million). "There are clear floors and spaces that interconnect and overlap," Williams says, and potential buyers "were literally crawling on their hands and knees because they were fearful of falling down." Selling such a place "is a bit more like marketing a piece of art." Maybe that's why art dealer Anthony d'Offay is having Christie's auction off his 1950 Japanese-in-metal house at 242 East 52nd Street (it was built for the Rockefellers by Philip Johnson, who acknowledges that it "would make a wonderful office"). Architect Edward Durell Stone's 1956 "neo-Baroque" 130 East 64th Street house was also a tough sale. The concrete façade was taken down by his widow, then rebuilt by order of the Landmarks Preservation Commission before it could be sold last year for $2.3 million. "Atypical" houses, says Sharon E. Baum of Corcoran, who sold it, "take longer to sell, but people like buying something that's a name property." In 1997, Desmond sold another Rudolph brainchild, 251 West 13th Street, for $1.95 million to TV writer Tom Fontana. Fontana spent two years and $1.7 million de-geniusing it ("The place was ridiculous," he told the *Times*). Even if the Beekman buyers' 5-year-old is terrified of the cliff-hanging Jacuzzi, their broker, Douglas Elliman's Jan Hashey, says their renovation "more or less consists of a quart of Windex and paper towels." CARL SWANSON

Horsing Around in the Hamptons

Kelly Klein gets ready for a stable life after Calvin.

GIDDY-UP! PHOTOGRAPHER KELLY KLEIN, Calvin's estranged wife, is about to buy the farm her horses already call home. Sources say she's set to pay $3.9 million for Five Tails, a horse habitat on Mitchell Lane in Bridgehampton. The property comes with stables and barns but no house. The sellers are Geri Bauer and actress Stefanie Powers (best known for playing crime-solving seventies millionairess Jennifer Hart on *Hart to Hart*), who ran it as a business. Real-estate sources say that Bauer and Powers have been interested in selling Five Tails for some time. They made the deal directly with Kelly; she already stabled there, so it made horse sense. Kelly keeps herself in the huge gray shingle-style house that she and Calvin bought on West End Road in East Hampton early in their marriage. Since they separated, Calvin has been renting in the East End, though the two are spotted together sometimes at equestrian events like the Hampton Classic. Meanwhile, Kelly's back in the saddle, and was linked last fall with Nick Manifold, a 31-year-old polo player.

For more on Hamptons real estate, log on to www.iHamptons.com

NOTABLE SALES

Upper West Side

144 West 82nd Street

Eight-bedroom, 6½-bath, 6,400-square-foot townhouse. Asking: $3.5 million. Selling: $3.7 million. Time on market: one year.

THIS FIVE-STORY 1882 TOWNHOUSE had crumbled into a crack-scented SRO by the time it was bought in a 1990 foreclosure. Buying out all the tenants took six years (one elderly man was given a limo ride all the way to Miami), and renovations—digging out a basement to create an additional floor, replacing the wood frame with steel, installing central A/C—took two and a half more. When it was done, there were two units; the lower one was rented by actor Richard Kind (Paul on *Spin City*), the upper by the CEO of a financial firm for $20,000 a month. When the landlord decided to sell (through Bellmarc's Ron Greenwood), the CEO offered full price, but a hedge-fund manager (brought in by Douglas Elliman's Lyn Scarpati) outbid her by $200,000—all cash. He's going to make it a one-family home again—complete with an elevator. C.S.

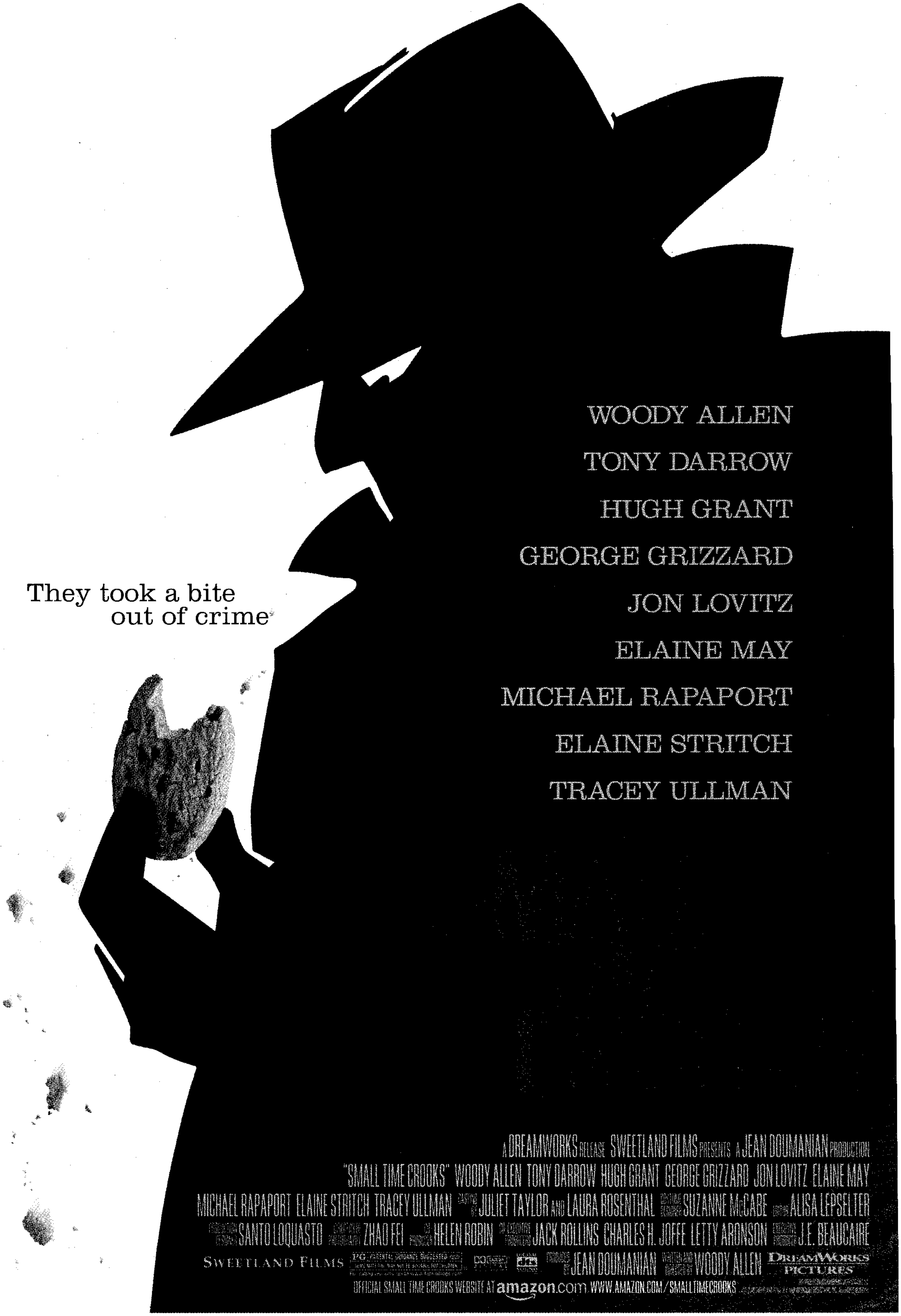
Midtown East

860 U.N. Plaza

Three-bedroom, 3½-bath, 2,500-square-foot co-op. Asking: $1.1 million. Selling: $1.2 million. Maintenance: $2,794. Time on market: one month.

THE INTERNATIONAL-STYLE ELEgance of this tower and its next-door twin has attracted Establishment figures since they went up in 1966. Bobby Kennedy and Johnny Carson once lived here; today, S. I. Newhouse and Walter Cronkite do. The buyer of this place, a Carter-administration secretary of the Army, is relocating from D.C. to run a Wall Street firm (Joanna Simon of Fox Residential Group sold it). Cable TV is included in the maintenance, despite the jaw-dropping northern and eastern views. CHRISTOPHER BONANOS

The SI life: 860 and 870 U.N. Plaza



They took a bite
out of crime

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TONY DARROW
HUGH GRANT
GEORGE GRIZZARD
JON LOVITZ
ELAINE MAY
MICHAEL RAPAPORT
ELAINE STRITCH
TRACEY ULLMAN

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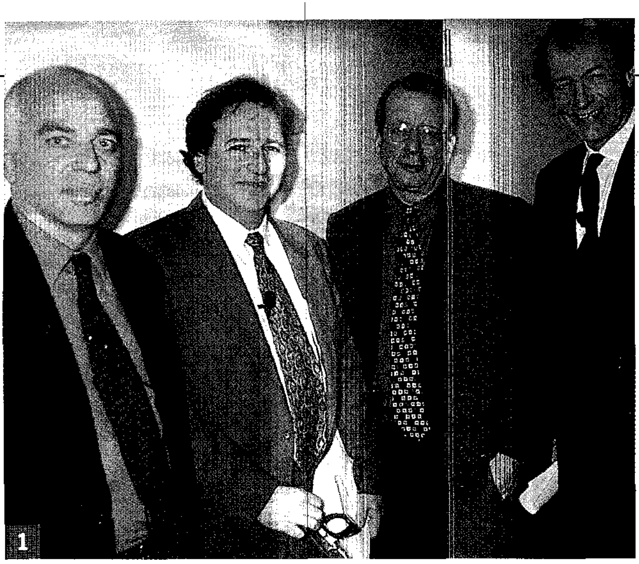
Breaking into Theatres May 19

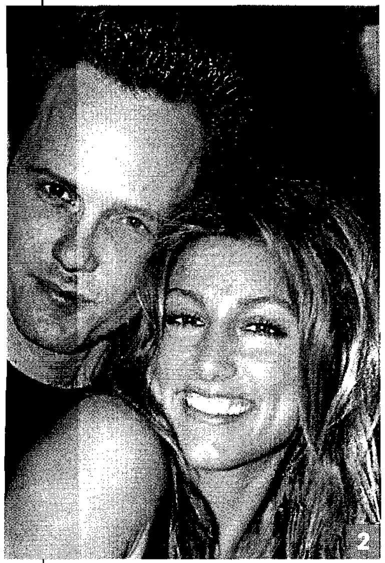


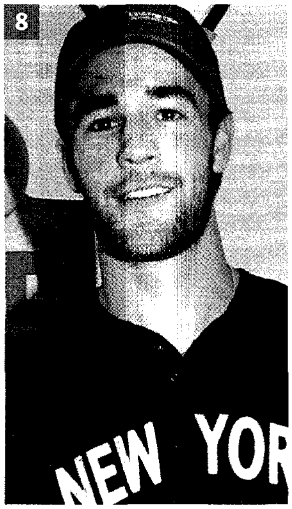
THE SCENE

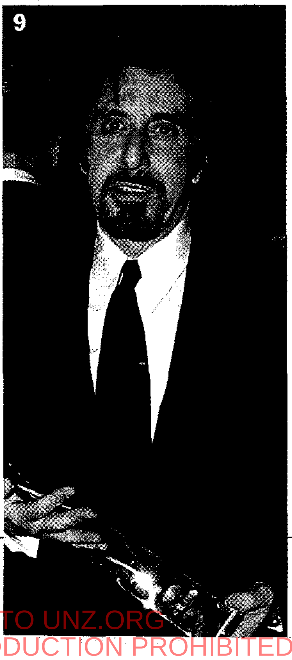
Summit View

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

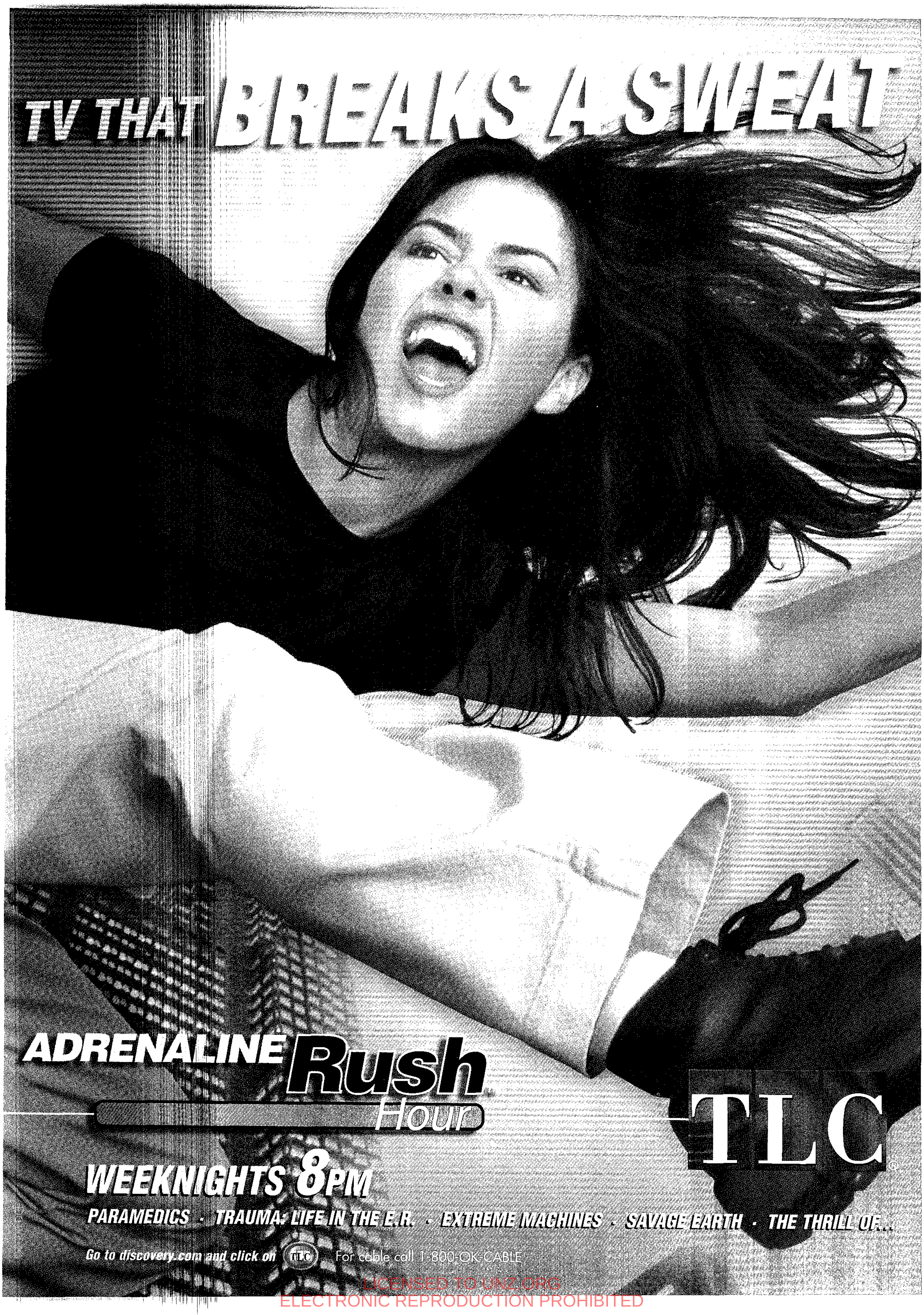
At the "Media Summit" sponsored by *New York* and *The Industry Standard* at MoMA May 3, old media and new media collided like opposing weather fronts. And while the participants were civilized, there was occasional thunder and lightning, cheered on by *New York*'s Michael Wolff and the *Standard*'s Jonathan Weber. In the morning's first panel, static built up between *Sopranos* executive producer Brad Grey and RealNetworks' Rob Glaser. "I'd feel pretty good if I lived where Brad does, and drove Brad's car," Glaser needled. "What's your company's market cap?" Grey shot back. Glaser had to admit it might be worth $7 billion. Grey: "So why are you talking to me?" Most, prudently, kept a foot on both sides of the old-new divide. "The key thing about the newspaper," said the *Times'* Arthur Sulzberger Jr., "is not the paper; it's *news*. I'm agnostic as to the means of delivery." Other panelists were looking for any means of delivery at all. Gerry Laybourne, of Oxygen, lacking a New York outlet, saw opportunity in Time Warner's battle with Disney: "I was hoping on Monday morning that Time Warner would put us on Channel 7." ATT's Michael Armstrong, whose stock had dropped 14 percent the day before, still had a sunny forecast, predicting virtually unlimited cable channels in a year. An old story, of course. But one that, if it happens, really *will* be new. Marion Maneker







1. Michael Wolff, Jonathan Weber, John Huey, and Charlie Rose at the "Media Summit." 2. Dean Winters and Jennifer Esposito at Halo for Esposito's birthday. 3. Hilary Quinlan and Helen Gurley Brown at the home of Betsy and Rick Rathe for Quinlan's birthday. 4. David and Catherine Bailey at Bergdorf Goodman's auction of Bailey photos to benefit the Elton John AIDS foundation. 5. Frankie Rayder, Sante D'Orazio, James King, and Carmen Kass at Mercer Kitchen for King's birthday. 6. Bo Derek, Jonathan Farkas, and Somers White at the ASPCA's Bergh Ball at the Plaza Hotel. 7. Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward at the Copacabana to benefit Blue Light Theater Company. 8. James Van Der Beek at the Kids for Kids benefit at Industria Superstudio for the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation. 9. Al Pacino at his Film Society of Lincoln Center gala tribute.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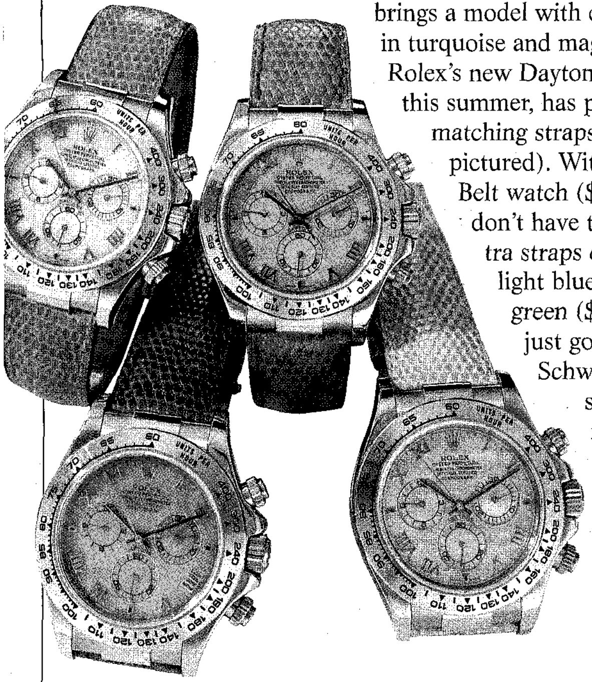
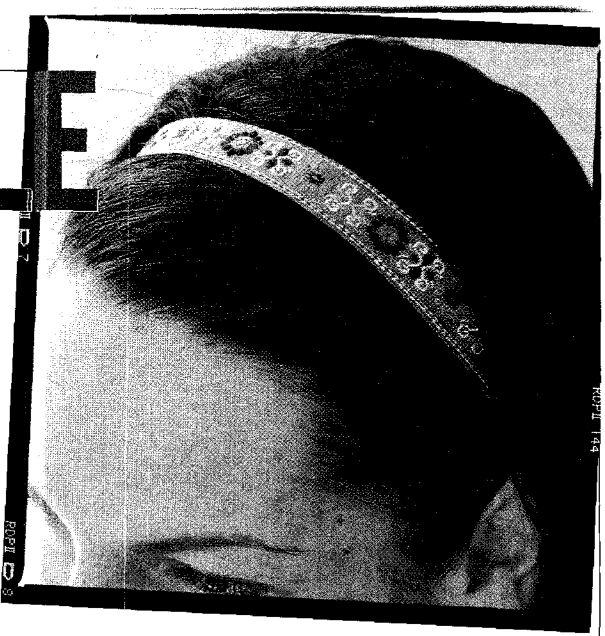
GOTHAMSTYLE

Bright Times Ahead



Those clunky steel watches wrapped around every fashionable wrist suddenly look too overbearing with this season's floral dresses. The first sign of the times was Concord's satin-strapped watch created for Oscar-goers like Angela Bassett; this fall brings a model with colored straps in turquoise and magenta ($7,250). Rolex's new Daytona, available this summer, has pastel dials and matching straps ($19,450, pictured). With Hermès's Belt watch ($1,300), you don't have to choose: Extra straps come in red, light blue, or apple green ($200 each). Or just go to FAO Schwarz, where kid-size Flik Flaks in every imaginable color are only $23.

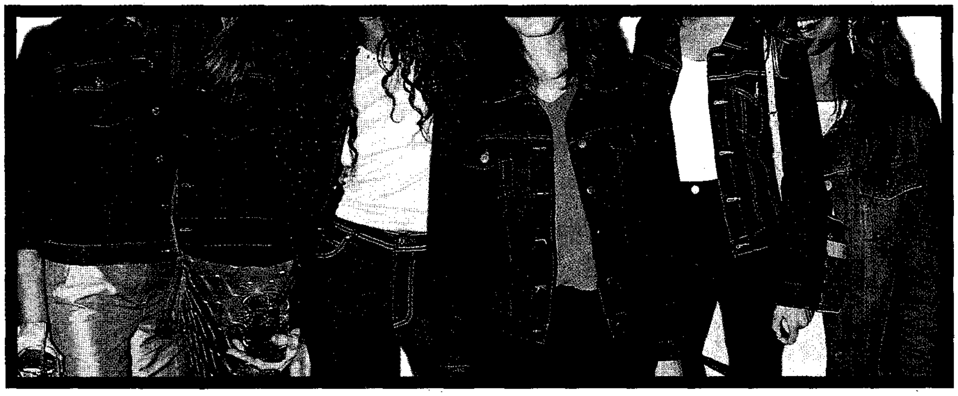
Shyama Patel



The Little Match Girls

Matching your headband to your shoes might be a bit *too* Park Avenue princess for most of us, but apparently not for those young enough to actually *be* Park Avenue princesses. The eclectically embroidered elastic headbands stitched up by ex–Saks shoe buyer Laura Siegel to coordinate with every pair of her own summer slides have become the latest accessory for the platforms-and-baby-tees set ($20–$22, available at Bloomingdale's, at Bendel, and on Siegel's own Website, levla.com; sold out at Scoop). But there may be a simpler reason for Siegel's schoolgirl success: The headbands have already been spotted on teen idols Natalie Portman and Britney Spears.

Nan Parry



Out of the Blue

"It's the trend that *will not die,*" says Beth Shepherd, co-owner of Kirna Zabête. While most fashion trends get a brief bask in the limelight before knockoff saturation relegates them to the consignment shops, the jean jacket has become *the* Manhattan uniform, worn to work, cocktail parties, and movie premieres. Now, with even the hoi polloi outfitted in standard-issue dark denim, industry insiders are attempting to distinguish themselves from the masses with upmarket interpretations like Celine's cropped tie-dye, Wink's studded white, and Hussein Chalayan's asymmetrically stitched jacket. "I have one in tan leather, one in white denim, one in dark denim," says Language owner Ana Abdul, who adds that she sells several Earl versions a day. But to stay ahead of the hordes, you might need more than three: "Right now," confesses *WWD*'s Roxanne Robinson, "I have six different kinds in my closet."

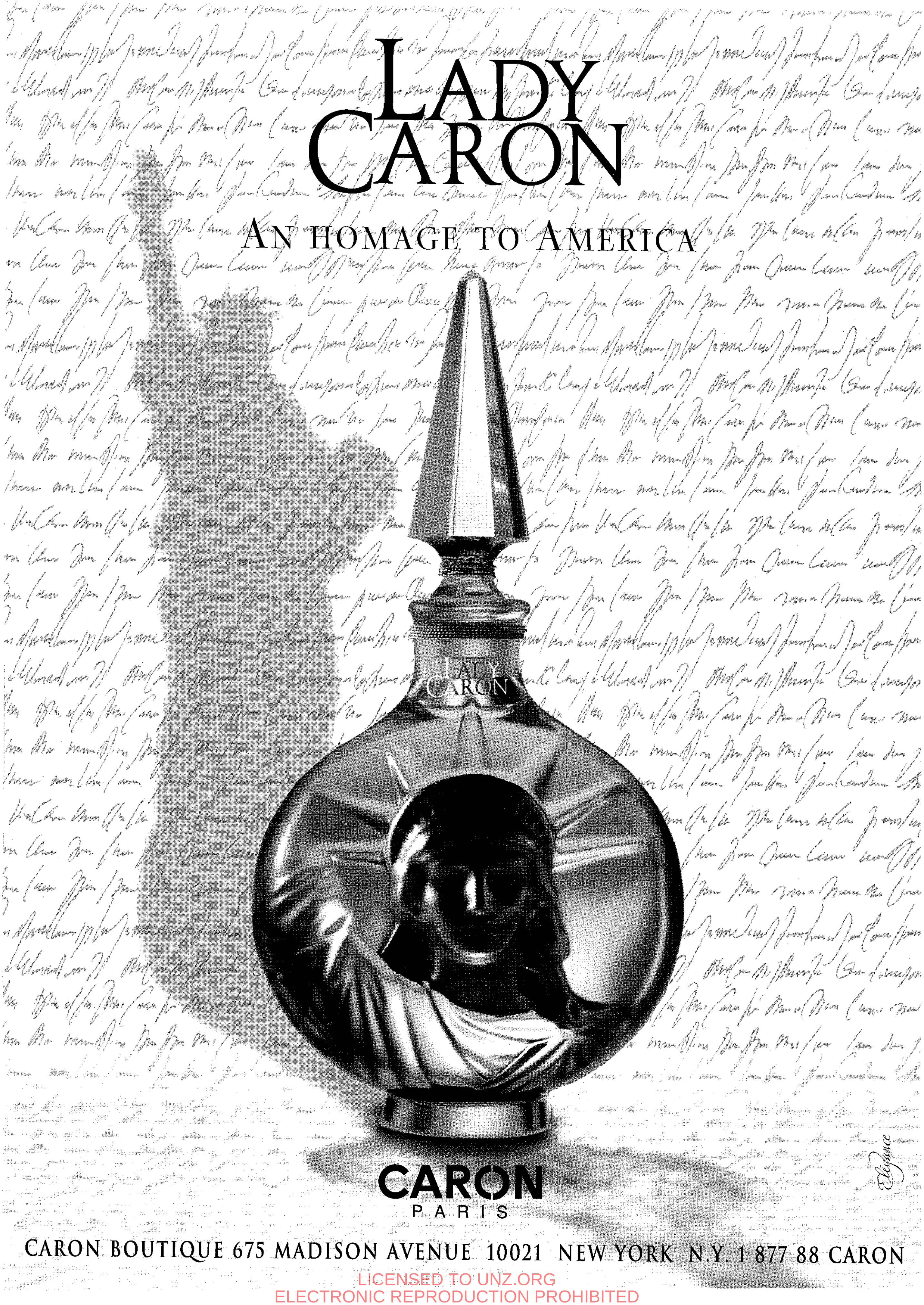
Sarah Bernard

Plus-Size Pants

With a bumper crop of bold-faced names announcing their expectations, stores and designers are competing to outfit the stars during their high-profile pregnancies. A Pea in the Pod, where Madonna, Cindy Crawford, and Jodie Foster have all rifled through the racks, is custom-making black leather pants with a stretch panel up front ($250) exclusively for celebrities like Felicity Huffman, Marlee Matlin, and Kristin Scott Thomas. Yes, civilians will be able to buy them, too—but they'll have to wait till August.

Beth Landman Keil

Photographs: from top, Lenora Gim; courtesy of Rolex; Patrick McMullan.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Elegance

CITYSIDE MARK JACOBSON

The Laptop Nomads

They're in every Starbucks and coffee shop; even sometimes in churches. Who are they? What are they typing? Don't they have a job? For the first time, one of these strangers speaks.

I USED TO HAVE A REAL SWEET OFFICE in Times Square, as sweet and run-down an office as a sweet and run-down guy like me could ever hope to have. The sub-Chandleresque firetrap was located up three flights of creaky, cockeyed stairs. Every day, I would arrive via what was once called the Double R train, nod to Mike the barber ($7 for the standard Grecian flattop) and Carlos the tailor (from Buenos Aires, he had cards for gaucho steakhouses), and trudge up to my ten-by-eight room off the air shaft. I'd close the door, drink a cup of coffee, light up a joint, turn on my Zenith 8680, peer down at the quivery blue letters, and start to type. In my writer's life, it is hard to remember ever being happier.

I was there on and off for almost ten years, from 1988 through early 1997, and never paid more than $200 a month. For months at a time I paid nothing, there being long stretches when no one seemed to own the building and, therefore, no one was around to take the rent. Next to a bathroom that grew only more disgusting after some derelict robbed the plunger, the place had its quirks. For a while, I thought it was haunted by Peter Noone. At oddly regular intervals, subliminal strains of the Herman Hermits song "I'm Into Something Good" filled the room. It wasn't until weeks later, when I saw *The Naked Gun,* which happened to be playing at the now-shuttered Embassy 47th Street, that I realized the song accompanied the movie's closing credits and I'd been hearing it through who-knew-how-many layers of walls.

The Russian girls enhanced the work environment. There were dozens of them around the corner, at Peepland, where they stood naked behind movable screens, bidding patrons to touch them, "two dollars for zah top, three for zah bottom." It was better than watching Gorbachev eat a slice of pizza at Sbarro's at 47th and Broadway, the area's previous Soviet connection. When their shift was over, the girls who weren't herded into Econoline vans by their vinyl-jacketed Brighton Beach mobster keepers could be found in Spirits, a grotty cave of a bar on the ground floor of my building, a place that maintained a working black-and-white television deep into the nineties. Ludmilla, a fabulous redhead with chalk-white skin and a silver eyebrow ring, was my favorite. Sometimes, I'd buy her a drink or two and listen to how she fed animals during her childhood on the farm collective outside Moscow.

NOW IT IS ALL GONE, EXCEPT FOR MIKE AND Carlos, who must know where the bodies are buried. The fleabag hotel next door is a Quality Inn, Spirits is the Pig and Whistle, and Ludmilla, chased by Rudy, is no doubt slaving away for some escort service in Kew Gardens. As for my little office, there's probably a couple of dot-coms crammed in there. The rent went up to $1,000—from nothing to $1,000; is that legal?—so now I'm gone, too, run out of Times Square with the rest. Officewise, it has never been the same.

I'VE TRIED WORKING IN SEVERAL LOCALES. The so-called "home office" sorely lacking in requisite tranquility, I rented a room at the YWCA in downtown Brooklyn, the only hovel I found under $700 suitable to my exceedingly modest needs. But there was a heat hassle, especially when the wind blew through uncaulked windows. I searched the local bulletin boards for space, only to see ads for "room in house, must respect my vegan lifestyle," which sounded like a lot to ask.

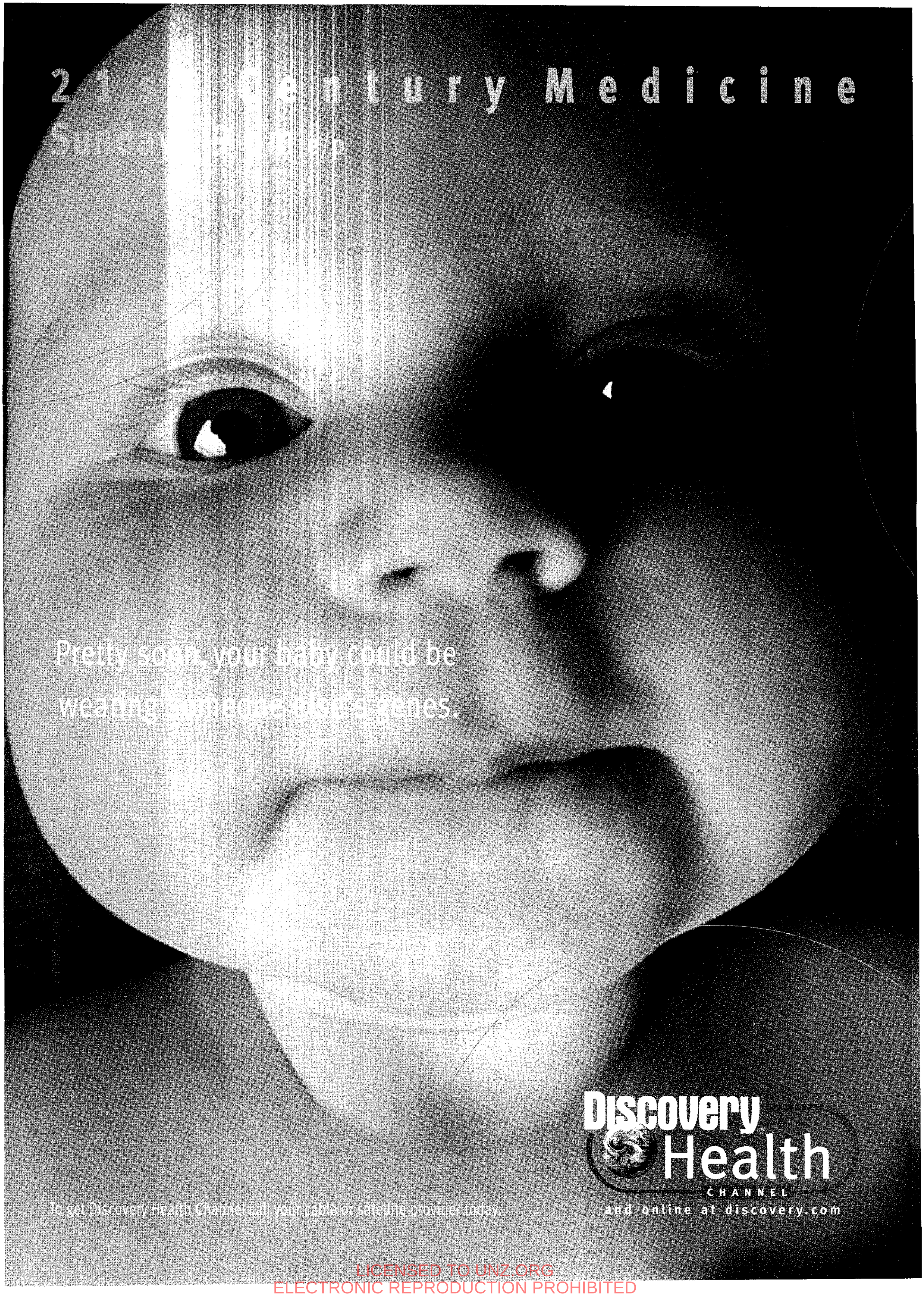
So I've become mobile, working all over town—have G3, will travel. I am not alone. These days, it is difficult to enter any place with a milk steamer and magazine rack and not see several typers, laptop covers perpendicular to Formica tables, batting away.

A new kind of nomad has arisen amid the New York real-estate crunch, the keyboarding vagabond, the itinerant lit worker.

RIGHT NOW I AM TYPING IN THE back pews of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church on 55th Street. For the roving urban scrivener, nothing beats the hallowed expanse of the 42nd Street Library Reading Room, but for those not in the immediate neighborhood, religious buildings suffice. There's plenty of room, plenty of quiet. On the off-chance you're praying, no one hassles you. Once, while I was typing at a synagogue on the West Side, a janitor asked what I was doing there, but I just said, "I'm Jewish—isn't that enough?" and he went away. Given a denominational choice, however, I type with the Catholics, amid the icons of a place like Saint Francis Xavier on 16th near Sixth. That mysterioso vibe really pumps the old creative juices.

The only problem with Catholic churches is the plug-in. Most of the re-

Illustration by Sean Kelly.



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ally evocative ones predate the electricians union, and for the traveling scribbler, the outlet is the grail. An expiring battery is counterproductive to carefully constructed prose. So I transmigrate toward the Presbyterians, although the Episcopalians are also good. They're modern, have done renovations; the wiring is up to code. You can plug in. Plus, on 55th Street today, the organist is practicing, whipping those giant pipes through a Bach chorale, throwing in a funky blue note here and there. It sure beats sitting under fluorescent lights in a soul-killing cubicle.

Churches are certainly preferable to bars, at least the ones I tend to frequent, where it is difficult to get through a paragraph without some rum-pot coming over to chew the fat. For instance, I was trying to get some work done amid the midday gloom and mildew of the Rogers Irish House on Beach and 116th Street in Rockaway when this deeply pickled passel of guzzlers surrounded me, transfixed by my screen as if watching the discovery of fire. Computer-literate they were not. “What's that? What's it say?” they marveled. I changed the font for them, made the letters real big, but they still stood there, coated tongues hanging, like the primates in *2001* regarding the monolith.

That's when I hit the road. Car-typing is especially well suited to setting a sense of place. Instead of putting on a Mingus record to summon the feel of the urban nightmare, you slap a converter into the cigarette lighter and go on location. Noirish scenes jump to life when composed (or decomposed) in the Dickensian shadow of the smokestacks of Schwartz Chemical Company in Long Island City or in the parking lot of Home Depot in Redhook. The thrum of passing trucks on the Gowanus Expressway gives hardboiled dialogue that extra snap. Or simply pull out the laptop when parked beside a hydrant in the middle of the midtown rush hour. Outside is madness, a smear of ambition and anxiety. Yet you, solitary in your Toyota cocoon, are invisible to the passing multitude, are as alone as if with quill pen and parchment deep in Thoreau's wood.

Even the dispossessed litterateur craves stability, though—a place to call home, however fleetingly. A friend of mine wrote five chapters of a novel in the lobby of the Marriott Marquis Hotel. He would have preferred the Carlyle or the St. Regis, but because he's a science-fiction writer, which is synonymous with *slob,* he would have blown his cover, something no traveling scrivener can afford. Besides, the hideous bus-station-size eighth-floor Marriott lobby, with its glassed-in elevators gill-stuffed with goggle-eyed tourists, afforded the off-world-colony aura his work needed.

Myself, these days I'm often at the Fall Café on Brooklyn's formerly rundown Smith Street. A frumpy couch oasis of genteel bohemia amid a cookie-cutter sea of caffeine commodification, the Fall welcomes the rootless. Here, the outlets are never taped over like at the electricity-stingy Berry and Bean in Park Slope. I have often sat at the Fall from ten in the morning until sundown, plugged in, papers piled up, and no one has ever found fault with my presence. Ordering a latte every three hours, leaving big tips, and giving up the table if they get busy handles the rent. Plus, they don't play the same Starbucks music as the Milwaukee Starbucks. Ask what's on and someone will say, “the soundtrack from *A Rage in Harlem*—is it great or what?”

> *“Given a denominational choice, I type with the Catholics. The only problem is the plug-in. Most of their really evocative churches predate the electricians union, and for the traveling scribbler,* **the outlet is the grail.**”

At the Fall, the sweep of the city's art life unfolds. In the morning, the dreamers are there, young, tense, talking of their movies, their books. By lunch, the stroller brigade arrives, the noisy, cute kids and their sleepy parents alternately thrilled and resentful. By afternoon, the place fills with the slightly battered veterans, house painters and the like, unwinding from day jobs. In such a place, the itinerant lit worker finds solidarity. It was only last week that I began to plug in at the Fall only to find a woman at the next table reaching for the same outlet. There was only one open plug, a lamp stuck into the other slot. Recognizing our common need, we wordlessly agreed to unplug the lamp, throwing half the room into near darkness. No one complained. Officeless vagabonds know desperation when they see it. ■

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THE BOTTOM LINE JAMES J. CRAMER

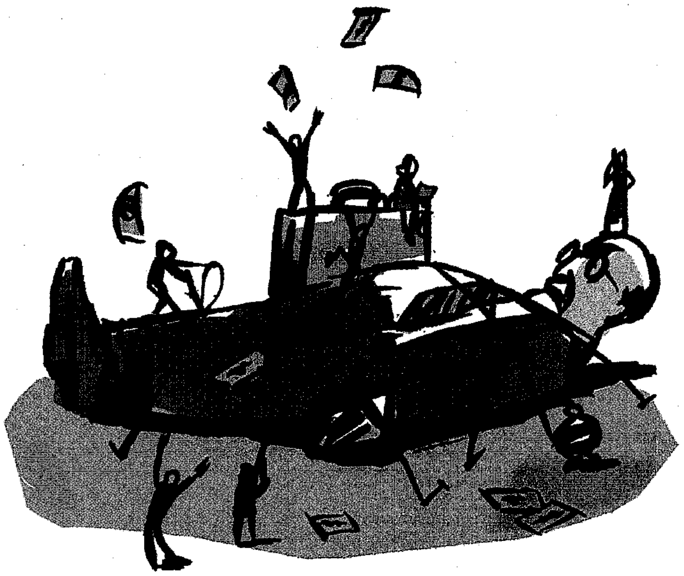
Soros Losers

When Wall Street insiders like George Soros start panicking—and that's all the insiders seem to do these days—it's time for you and me to stay cool and shop for bargains.

AMONG HEDGE-FUND MANAGERS and trading desks around this country, there is massive contempt for the buying habits of the little guy, the retail investor. The professionals have this image of the do-it-yourself investors as mindless buyers of dips who never take anything off the table and don't know jack about valuation or earnings or prospects. The professionals await the dip that *can't* be bought, the one where the stay-at-home investors get buried alive when the dip doesn't hold. When you get off the desk with these professionals, they speak of the great comeuppance and how sweet it will be when the pathetic masses finally get slaughtered because of their ridiculous optimism. They blame *you* for the overvalued market they must outperform. They long for the day when the individual investor's blind belief in stocks gets replaced with the same natural cynicism that the pros have felt toward the markets for a decade now.

Forget about it. The pros are wrong. Not only are they wrong, but it is the foolish behavior of the professionals themselves that causes the dips, that brings on these once-a-year sales the public salivates over. Individual investors, who learned years ago not to pay retail in clothes and food and tools and housewares, know not to pay retail for stocks, too. At our trading turrets, we call it the Federated Effect, named after that chain of stores that seems to throw a once-a-year blow-out sale every single week. Individuals know to wait for sales, and it is the highly paid, sanctimonious pros who cause them.

Consider the sale the pros threw on April 14, a day that now looks suspiciously like the single best moment to buy stocks in this millennium to date. That was the day the NASDAQ completed its worst week ever, with the indices declining 25 percent while individual stocks gave up 50 to 60 percent. We were told by the graybeards at the big firms that inflation, specifically a worse-than-expected consumer-price index, caused this sell-off and that it was basically "unbuyable" because of the havoc that inflation was going to wreak on equities. No professional strategists stepped up to the plate to tell the public to buy this dip. Not one of the dozen or so major firms said that maybe the problems were structural in nature, that someone big blew up or had to sell. It was the fundamentals that caused the downdraft, they said, and they used the sell-off to make still one more prediction that the public, the fools, would rush in where the graybeards fear to tread.



At the conclusion of that fateful day, I wrote a piece for TheStreet.com that suggested the real reason for the decline: "The last hour felt like someone or many people were going out of business. I think we will discover that somebody big blew up and that's the selling we saw." But the next day's papers were filled with dire stories about how professionals felt stocks had become too dangerous to own in light of the new inflationary outlook. Inflation mattered again, and you'd better get out while you could.

They were wrong.

We now know that the destruction of George Soros's Quantum fund caused that vicious decline, as the ultimate in professional money managers decided to blow out all of his tech stocks, creating a fabulous opportunity to buy that only the unjaded public took advantage of. Quantum put on a magnificent two-day sale of such gems as Qualcomm, JDSU, and Veritas, stocks that simply wilted under the Soros sell pressure. Five billion dollars' worth of markdowns translated into a magnificent buying opportunity. We know the public took advantage of it because the inflows to mutual funds that next week were staggering. The market has been off to the races ever since.

This Soros-created decline is just the latest in an incredible series of gaffes by the professionals that have allowed do-it-yourselfers to triumph over Those Who Should Know Better. In 1997, when the Asian conflagration scorched the emerging markets of Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong, our markets failed to ignite, despite the predictions of all the pros, and seemed asbestoslike in their

TheStreet.com

"Dear Dagen" and "TheStreet.com Tax Forum," written by Dagen McDowell and Tracy Byrnes, respectively, are Q&A columns designed to address a wide range of personal-finance queries. And they're available free at www.thestreet.com.

Illustration by Whiting Tennis.

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IT'S EASIER TO GRASP THE FUTURE IF YOU KNOW WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.

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A Division of The **McGraw·Hill** *Companies* health and durability. That is, until Barton Biggs came on CNBC and sprayed lighter fluid all over the place with his patented "Get out now!" alarm. (Keep that guy out of a crowded theater, will you?) The result: a 750-point swoon that was the last great opportunity to purchase the Dow below 7,000 (it's now closer to 11,000). I remember standing the next morning on the steps of Federal Hall, near the New York Stock Exchange, being interviewed by Charles Gibson for *Good Morning America*. The speaker before me, Jim Grant, another "acknowledged pro," had just stated that the United States' stock market faced a catastrophe and that *sales* made at that morning's prices would represent great trades for those who were wise enough to sell. I grabbed my cell phone during the commercial break and instructed my desk to buy everything it could, and then I called the wife and urged her immediately to make our uniform gifts to minors that morning rather than wait until the end of the year. When the camera swung to me, Gibson asked if it was the end of the world. I said I hoped not because I was putting every penny to work to take advantage of the professional-induced selling panic. I think Charlie might have thought I had lost my mind, but we made, over the next 24 hours, the most we have ever made in that short a period, and spent the rest of the year playing foosball and Ping-Pong in the office, sitting on the lead we owed to that sale the professionals threw for us.

> *"The pools of money the professionals run are now too outsized for their own good.* **When they panic, we all get splashed**, *if not drenched, by their selling. They create their own personal crashes."*

In fact, I didn't get another chance to buy the market that cheap until the bust-up of Long-Term Capital, the geniuses of Greenwich who had convinced everyone that they could make the most money with the least risk. Their King Midas–in–reverse act, when they ran out of credit, created still one more fantastic dip that the *(continued on page 108)*

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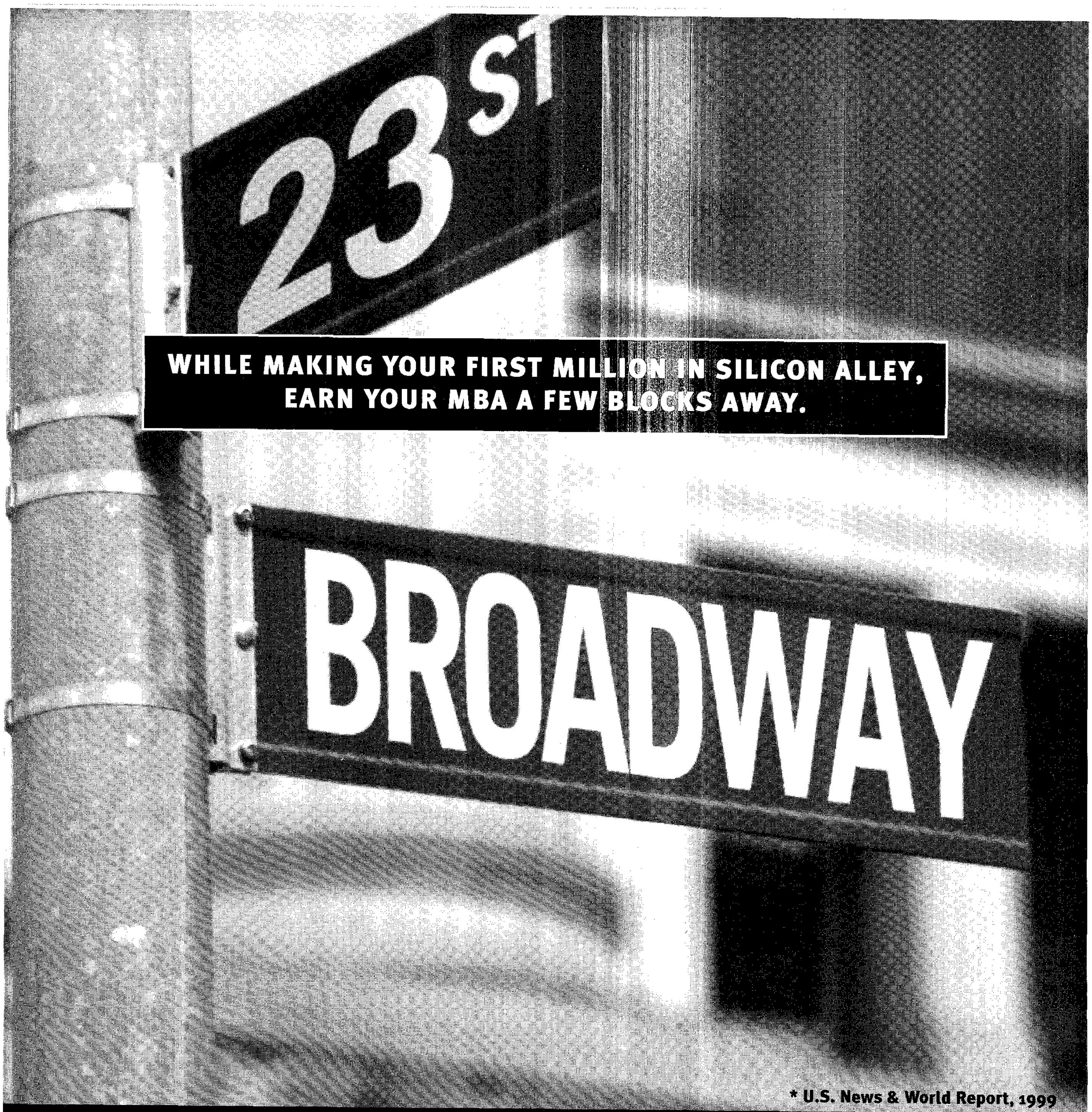
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* U.S. News & World Report, 1999

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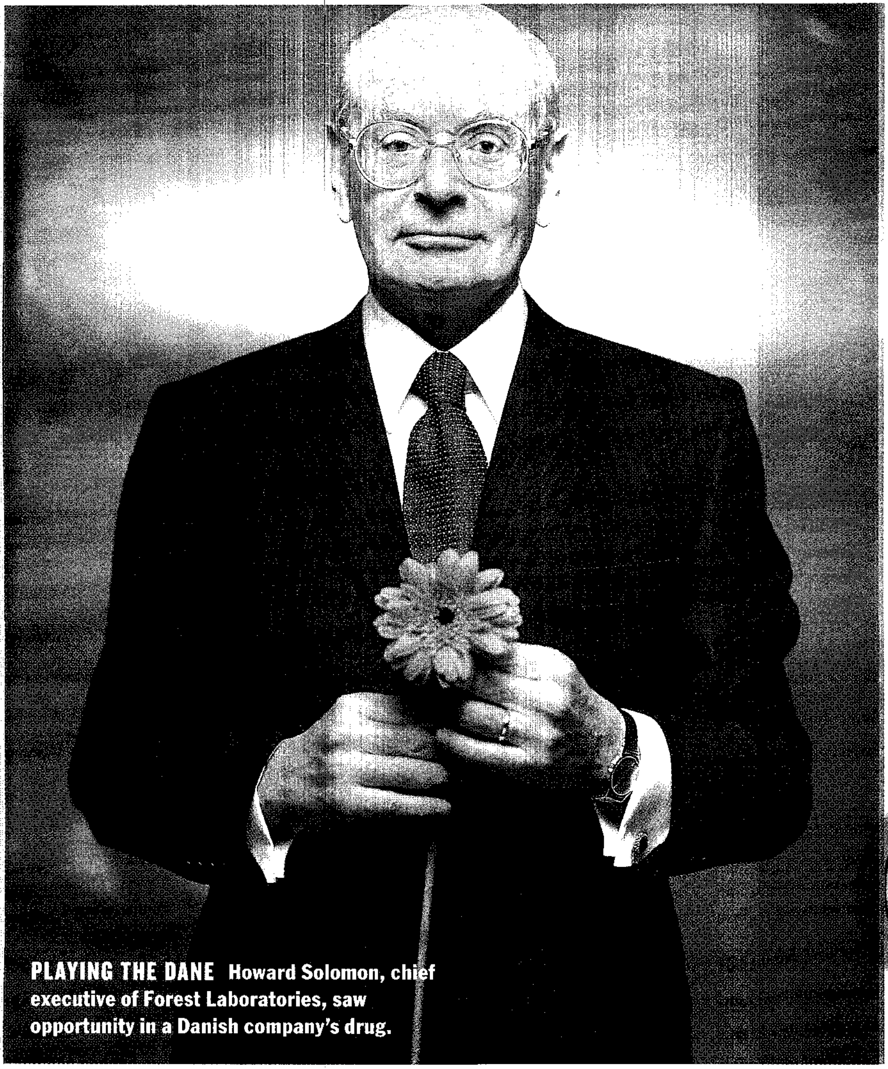
INSIDE THE HAPPINESS BUSINESS

BEFORE A DRUG LIKE CELEXA CAN EASE THE MINDS OF PATIENTS, MARKETERS MUST CAPTURE THE MINDS OF DOCTORS—USING FREE GIFTS, DINNERS, PROPAGANDA, AND RESEARCH FUNDS. A HARD LOOK AT THE HARD SELL.

BY DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK

DR. RONALD A. RUDEN PRACTICES MEDICINE IN A SUITE THAT resembles a vast underground hangar, below a high-rise on the Upper East Side. His waiting room is furnished with small café tables and colorful Macintosh computers, so idle patients can surf the Web. Ruden and his partner run one of the largest practices in the city. He personally sees nearly 200 patients a week, compared with 50 for most doctors, he says. ◆ Ruden is an internist, not a psychiatrist, but on top of his bustling practice, he managed in his spare time to publish a book, *The Craving Brain*, sketching out some unconventional ideas about the roots of addiction. He is also an enthusiastic prescriber of antidepressants. ◆ A few months ago, a woman who works in his office—I will call her Heidi—came to Ruden seeking help. A middle-aged immigrant, Heidi told him she had always been a worrier. Recently, though, her anxiety had risen to a new pitch. She found herself rechecking minor tasks three or four times to be sure they were done. Sometimes at home in her apartment in Queens, she grew so nervous that her heart raced; she'd board a bus back to the office just to make sure that everything was in order. ◆ After a brief consultation, Ruden stepped into the hallway, reached into a cabinet, and took out some bulky blue-and-yellow cardboard packets labeled CELEXA.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAY GULLIXSON



PLAYING THE DANE Howard Solomon, chief executive of Forest Laboratories, saw opportunity in a Danish company's drug.

NLY TWO YEARS AGO, NO ONE IN THE U.S. had heard of Celexa. But since its launch in September 1998, it has captured over 13 percent of new prescriptions in the $6.3 billion market for its class of antidepressants, which also includes Prozac, Zoloft, and Paxil. And Celexa is the only one whose market share is growing.

The drug has achieved this spectacular growth without any decisive advantage over its predecessors. "With these antidepressants," says Ruden, "you have to understand that we really don't know what we are doing. We know these drugs work, but we don't know exactly how, and each one is a little different."

The reason for Celexa's stunning success is not science but marketing. Drug-industry consultants Scott-Levin say U.S. pharmaceutical companies spent about $10 billion last year on drug promotions. Most of that—$9 billion—went toward marketing to doctors (about $12,000 for each doctor in the U.S.). Drug makers command an army of more than 68,000 salespeople, one for every eleven doctors in the U.S. While pharmaceutical companies justify high drug prices by pointing to astronomical research and development costs, many who study the industry say drug companies spend more, on marketing and promotions, especially for drugs like Celexa.

Celexa is what is known in the business as a "me-too" drug. *The Medical Letter,* a nonprofit newsletter that evaluates new drugs, pronounced that Celexa had "no advantage" over Prozac, Zoloft, and Paxil. All adjust the level of serotonin in the brain. All four improve the mood of about 65 percent of the moderately depressed patients who take them.

Ruden has been prescribing Prozac for years. "A familiar drug gets to be like an old friend," he says. He is on good terms with Ashleigh and Julie, the Prozac drug reps who visit him from Eli Lilly & Co. Like other busy doctors, Ruden is showered with small gifts and invitations to events at fancy restaurants. Once, a sales rep called to invite him and his wife to a Yankees game. Ruden told her, "Look, just give me the tickets," and he took his family instead. There are so many new drugs appearing all the time, Ruden says, that he has to rely in part on the drug salespeople to keep him up-to-date. But he says he threatens them if they aren't forthright: "Tell me the warts," he warns them. "If I prescribe something, and its wrinkles—its possible problems—catch me by surprise, I will never prescribe your drug again."

Michelle and Tina, new reps from Forest Laboratories promoting Celexa, filled his cabinets with "a ton of free samples." They told him Celexa was "the cleanest" antidepressant, with a "favorable side-effect profile." And they suggested that Celexa may be less likely to bring on Prozac's most infamous side effect—the tendency to sap the libido and inhibit orgasm.

Ruden was skeptical—he was convinced the whole class of drugs shared that drawback—but he tried the new pills on a few patients. He found that Celexa seemed a little less "activating" than Prozac, which sometimes causes agitation, he says. Heidi took the samples Ruden gave her, and a prescription for one 20-mg. capsule a day. A few months later, Heidi says, Celexa restored her life to normal: "I can relax, watch TV, fall asleep. I thank Dr. Ruden from the bottom of my heart. Actually, I should thank the sales reps, Michelle and Tina, too, next time they're here."

"YOU MAY HAVE REA

DRUG SALES REPRESENTATIVES HAVE BEEN around ever since the Food and Drug Act first created prescription drugs in the twenties. They are known in the industry as drug reps or detailers. (To pitch a drug to a doctor is to "detail" him, in the salesmen's argot.) The ranks of drug reps have swollen in recent years, from 36,000 in 1994 to 68,000 today, according to Scott-Levin. Although some drug reps hold degrees in pharmacy, medical experience is hardly a prerequisite. Dr. Jon Mohrer, an internist practicing in Forest Hills, Queens, recalls a salesman who walked into his office not long ago and said, "I know you!" Mohrer assumed it was just another play for his attention. But it turned out the salesman had previously served his family as a waiter at a neighborhood pizza parlor. Pfizer, a marketing powerhouse, has earned the industry nickname Semper Pfizer for its policy of recruiting former military personnel and teaching a hard-sell mentality.

Selling drugs to physicians takes quite a bit more training than most sales positions, of course. Forest, for example, runs a three-month training program out of a special campus on Long Island. After "graduating," sales reps receive monthly packets of information to digest. They are tested over the phone by a computerized quiz system. But it is well worth it. "Pharmaceuticals is a very hard sales job to get," says René Backer, a star Forest rep and now a regional director who works out of her home in Philadelphia. "It tends to be among the higher-paying sales jobs I can imagine." She declines to comment on her own paycheck, but other drug reps say that with a good incentive bonus, a successful rep can make $140,000 a year.

The typical drug rep is female, about 30 years old, well dressed, and attractive—picture a Jil Sander suit and a giant suitcase on wheels. Doctors make the acquaintance of their first drug reps within their first month of residency. Reps flood training programs with pens, coffee mugs, stethoscopes, and bags, and are delighted to pick up the tab for all of a student's textbooks. (The reps stick their companies' logos inside the covers, of course.) At most hospitals, drug companies also cover the cost of an important part of resident training by sponsoring talks by medical experts, inevitably on subjects related to their products. A rep touting an antibiotic, for example, will pay an infectious-disease specialist a small sum to address surgical residents about transplants, where antibiotics are essential. The rep may even say a few words about her product after the talk.

More often, though, food is the reps' weapon of choice. They arrange with head residents to cater buffet lunches in clinics. As hungry residents load up their plates, reps buttonhole them to repeat short plugs for their pills' best attributes, like "lower side-effect profile" or "more digestible." They beep residents on their pagers to invite them to meals and happy hours. Some hospitals have bulletin boards full of reps' business cards, so residents can call for a meal whenever they feel like it. "They always try to take you to the fanciest restaurant possible, so they can really lure you in," says Laura Goetz, a surgical resident at Northwestern Medical Center in Chicago. "It's viewed as a prostitute-pimp relationship." The residents make up nicknames for their favorite reps, she says, like "Diflucan Dave," who hocks an anti-fungal pill, or "Trovan Tom," who touted an antibiotic that was heavily marketed until it killed six patients by poisoning their livers.

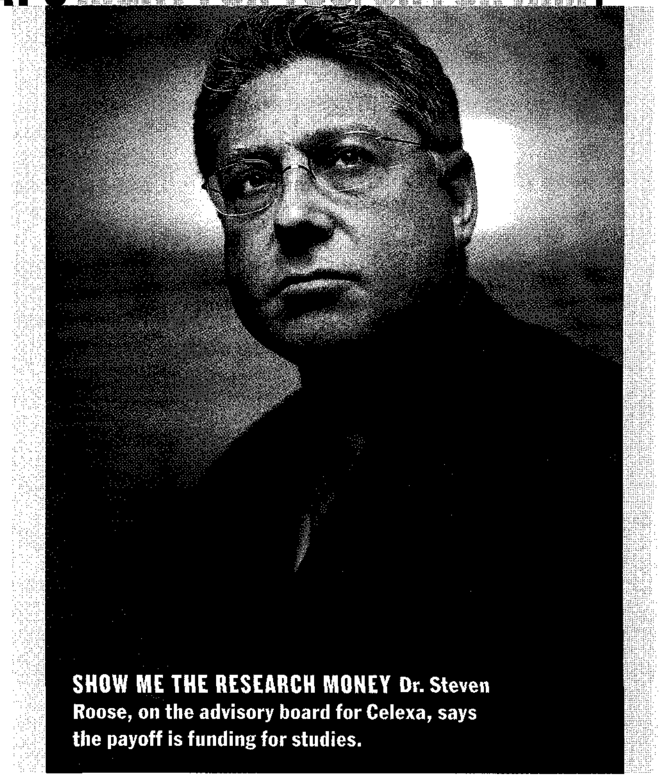
Emerging from an organ-transplant operation into the hallway of her hospital, Goetz recently ran into a familiar drug rep. He quizzed her about what drugs were used in the surgery, and she happily rattled them off. "Thanks so much—you really made my day," he said, then handed her a $3 Starbucks coupon. "It just makes you feel kind of cheesy," she says.

IF NOT FOR A CHANCE MEETING, CELEXA might never have been introduced in the U.S. The active chemical in Celexa, citalopram, was first concocted by researchers working for the small Danish company H. Lundbeck in 1972, about the time Lilly first synthesized Prozac. But Lundbeck ran into problems in early tests—its antidepressant proved toxic to beagles, because of what turned out to be a problem specific to the canine metabolism. But by the time the mystery was solved, three other antidepressants were heading into the U.S. market. Citalopram went on to become the best-selling antidepressant in some European countries, but Lundbeck missed out on the U.S., which is the biggest market and the only one free of price restrictions. The few compounds that make it to market as viable drugs bring in profits as high as 90 percent of their prices.

In 1995, an investment banker from London happened to visit the office of Howard Solomon, chief executive of Forest Laboratories, a tiny New York drug company. Seventy-two years old, tall, slender, and reserved, Solomon began his career as a lawyer and entrepreneur. He founded a small chain of bowling alleys and invested in Manhattan office properties before taking over in 1977 at Forest, which had been a legal client.

Solomon's ears perked up when the visiting banker happened to mention Lundbeck, noting in passing that its main product was an antidepressant popular in Europe but unavailable here. Forest doesn't discover its own drugs, relying instead on licensing compounds from others, and Solomon knew that grabbing even a small piece of the fast-growing antidepressant market could be a windfall.

I TO WONDER: IS YOUR DOCTOR DOING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU, OR FOR HIM?"



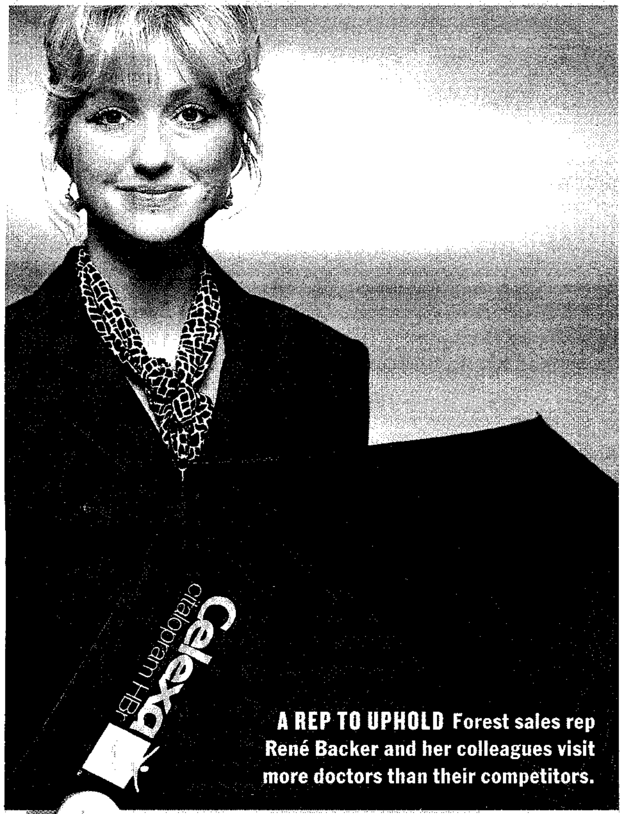
SHOW ME THE RESEARCH MONEY Dr. Steven Roose, on the advisory board for Celexa, says the payoff is funding for studies.

To Solomon's chagrin, however, Lundbeck's executives wouldn't agree to meet—they'd already been through the mill with U.S. drug companies (both Pfizer and Warner-Lambert had signed licensing deals before backing out). So Solomon resorted to a white lie. He sent a message to Lundbeck's chief executive, Erik Sprunk-Jansen, that he was going to be in Copenhagen anyway—could he just stop by? Sprunk-Jansen, a polite man, assented.

After a brief presentation at Lundbeck headquarters a few days later, Sprunk-Jansen took Solomon to lunch in the company's elegant dining room, where Solomon scrambled to build a rapport. He had read every work by the great Danish author Isak Dinesen, he told them. And did he mention that he was the president of the New York City Ballet? Sprunk-Jansen was impressed. Peter Martins, the ballet-master-in-chief of the New York City Ballet, grew up in Denmark. Solomon said Martins was a good friend, and offered to introduce him.

Sprunk-Jansen and his wife later joined Solomon for a ballet performance in New York, and they dined together at Le Bernardin. At dinner, Sprunk-Jansen's wife used a napkin to calculate the potential profits to be made in the U.S. market. In early 1996, Sprunk-Jansen agreed to take a chance on tiny Forest and license the drug.

It was the start of a flourishing friendship. When Peter Martins choreographed *Swan Lake* at the Danish Royal Ballet, Solomon bought an entire row of seats for Lundbeck and Forest executives. Afterward, Sprunk-Jansen hosted a dinner party for 50 at his home in Copenhagen. Everything was in black and white for a *Swan Lake* theme, with a



A REP TO UPHOLD Forest sales rep René Backer and her colleagues visit more doctors than their competitors.

"THEY WOULDN'T MAKE A BONUS IF THEY DIDN'T SELL CELEXA," SNIPI

pastry swan sitting on a mirror in the middle of an enormous table. Sprunk-Jansen later invited Solomon to a dinner modeled on Dinesen's novel *Babette's Feast.* "The only thing different is the year of the wine," Sprunk-Jansen told Solomon.

Finally, with U.S. regulatory approval secure, Forest Laboratories prepared for launch. On September 19, 1998, Solomon strode to the center of the stage at the San Diego convention center, where a crowd of 2,000 drug reps had gathered from around the country. (About 1,100 of them came from Warner-Lambert, which had signed on as a marketing partner.) Part of the San Diego Symphony performed, and peals of electric guitar filled the air.

Every big new drug is launched with such an event—part pep rally, part pharmacology seminar, interrupted by role-playing sessions to practice "verbatims," or scripts for detailing doctors. But when Solomon took the podium, he added an unusual motivational flourish. Telling the reps that to sell Celexa, they needed to understand depression, he began reading from the recollections of "an author who himself experienced clinical depression." Some later learned the author was his own son, Andrew. (His book, a study of depression, is scheduled for publication later this year.)

While Howard Solomon was chasing Celexa, it turned out, his son had been afflicted with a melancholy so severe that at times he couldn't bear to leave his bed. "I will be on medication for a long time," Andrew Solomon reflected in one of the passages his father read. "Every morning and every night, I look at the pills in my hand, and sometimes they seem like writing in my hand, hieroglyphics saying that the future may be all right and that I owe it to myself to live on and see. I feel sometimes as though I am swallowing my own funeral twice a day, because without these pills I would be long gone."

But Howard Solomon quickly left such somber subjects behind. Celexa, he told the crowd, had become a best-selling antidepressant in other countries because of its "inherent advantages," not because of its enormous marketing support, which a company Lundbeck's size couldn't afford. "But here in the U.S.," he added, "Celexa is going to be the largest-promoted antidepressant, with the most physician calls and the largest promotional budget, and we are going to be doing it with the most successful sales forces in the industry." The crowd gave him a standing ovation.

THE PRESENCE OF DRUG REPS WHEELING suitcases of small gifts and pills through waiting rooms and hospital corridors is an uncomfortable issue for doctors. "There is a fine line," says Dr. John C. Nelson, a Salt Lake City obstetrician-gynecologist, a trustee of the American Medical Association, and the group's spokesman on the issue. "This is America—the land of the free and home of the entrepreneur. In a world where there are lots of similar medications to chose from, there has got to be a way for a drug maker to try to make its voice heard above the fray," Nelson says. "But if you think your doctor might be influenced unduly by a drug company, then you may have reason to wonder, is your doctor doing what is right for you or for him? Am I prescribing the medicine that is right for you or the medication that bought me the latest trip to Aspen? Studies have shown that I am more likely to prescribe a drug over the next few days after its maker takes me to lunch."

In 1989, Nelson became concerned about drug companies' influence after an experience with the new estrogen-replacement patch—at the time, more expensive and less proven than an oral equivalent. "I tried it, but it irritated patients' skin," Nelson says. "The reps said 'Thanks' and gave me a pen. My partners said, 'Heck no, that's more expensive and less proven.' Then the company took one on a scuba-diving trip and the other on a golf vacation. They both started using it and, to my knowledge, still do."

Nelson wrote an essay about the experience in the *Journal of the American Medical Association,* and it sparked a change in the organization's guidelines to discourage expensive gifts without any medical purpose. The definitions, however, remain broad and subjective.

"The AMA lost a lot of members over the rule, because people think we are too tight," Nelson says, adding that drawing the right lines in his own practice remains a "struggle." Recently, Zoloft's maker, Pfizer, took Nelson to the finest restaurant in Salt Lake City to hear a local psychiatrist talk. "It was a nicer dinner than I could afford myself," says Nelson, whose family includes a brood of eight kids. "It's the old question—will you sleep with me for a hundred dollars? For a thousand? Once you accept the gift, you know what you are."

TO BEGIN ITS SALES CAMPAIGN, YEARS BEFORE the launch, Forest recruited a team of twelve bellwether psychiatric researchers to a Celexa advisory board, to help assess the drug's potential. "You can figure out pretty easily who is an influencer in the area of psychiatry," says Nefertiti Green, one of Forest's Celexa marketing directors.

Like all companies, Forest pays each of its board members a small "honorarium" to participate in meetings, covers their travel expenses, and, more important, puts up money to pay for their research as well. Green says the company follows the American Psychiatric Association guidelines—paying doctors about $500 to speak at a local symposium, $1,500 if it is national. Such payments from drug companies have caused controversy, most notably in the case of Dr. Martin Keller, a Brown University professor of psychiatry and member of Forest's advisory board. The Boston *Globe* reported that in 1998, out of $842,000 in income, he made nearly $556,000 from consulting to drug companies—none of which he disclosed when he published research about their drugs.

Dr. Steven Roose, a researcher at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, is

N ANONYMOUS ZOLOFT REPRESENTATIVE. "IT WAS DO-OR-DIE FOR THEM."

another member of Forest's advisory board. "It's nice to get an honorarium of a couple thousand dollars, or to go give a talk, especially if it is in a nice place—don't let anybody tell you that the money means nothing," he told me, sitting underneath a Jasper Johns poster in his small office. "But the honorarium is gone in two pair of Prada shoes and a bag. What really matters is the research—that's where the deep issues are."

An academic medical researcher's career often depends on being able to conduct important large-scale studies, and funding from drug companies can be a big help. Some fret that drug-company funding inevitably alters the course of research. "Sometimes, when research funds are limited, you will go along with drug-company studies that may be very good, but they aren't what you would do otherwise," says Roose. "There really is a pharmaceutical-academic complex." But Forest impressed its experts by going the extra mile. The company agreed to fund a project that its researchers originally proposed—a landmark study of depression in people over 75, known as the "old-old study." Forest liked the idea because Celexa may have real advantages with very old patients, because of its limited interactions with other drugs. The company is even paying for expensive brain-imaging tests and patient interviews.

"The real way to influence researchers is to let them do a study like this—that is the quid pro quo, the benefit you get from helping them," Roose says. Of course, every researcher knows that a single lapse in integrity could ruin his credentials, he says. Investigating the effects of Prozac on the heart, Roose happened to discover that it is much less effective than earlier drugs in treating severe melancholia. "I didn't expect it. It just hit me in the ass. Was I a popular person with Lilly? No. So maybe I wasn't invited to speak for a while—who cares?" He told Forest that Celexa isn't so effective against severe depression, either.

Drug makers, of course, don't tend to publicize views like that. In a Forest press release, its advisory-board members sound like critics in a movie ad. "Celexa will be a friendly drug for the physician to use, and certainly a friendly drug for the patient," raves Dr. George Alexopoulos of the Cornell Medical School, another leader of the old-old study.

"Did he say that? I would be shocked," Roose says. "A thoughtful opinion of a drug can't be reduced to a quip."

TO WARM UP THE MARKET BEFORE CELEXA'S debut, Forest began with an advance team of nine "medical-science liaisons" hired in August 1998. The liaisons, many with degrees in pharmacy, set out "to form relationships" with the top 200 or so "thought leaders" in psychiatry, another tier of trendsetting researchers and clinicians. Each medical liaison worked on a list of 22 doctors at institutions like Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital in New York and Massachusetts General in Boston.

In the summer of 1998, still months before the official launch, Forest turned to a tried-and-true technique to kick off the Celexa campaign: paying doctors, essentially, to prescribe it. Before the drug's approval, the "psychiatric thought leaders" on the advisory board had each put about twenty patients on the drug and answered questions about dosage and results. Next, the company added a nationwide test called Early Access to Symptom Evaluation, or EASE. About 600 doctors tested Celexa on about five patients apiece. Doctors received $250 for their help, and another $50 a patient for reporting results—a total of about $500. (Participating patients start the drug free of charge.) The tests helped gather extra information about the drug's effects. Just as important, the tests acquaint doctors with the pill and start some patients on it.

Then Forest's reps sprang into action. The company picked about 22,000 of the biggest prescribers of antidepressants and hit them with a soft sell. "We went out before the launch period, with just the FDA-approved package insert, no Madison Avenue glossy promotional material," says John MacPhee, the other Forest marketing director in charge of Celexa. "We said, 'We're here because you are so expert in treating depression. Let's talk about all the pluses and minuses. Let's talk about the beagle dogs. It's new. You can get an early experience, if you want to get a jump on a lot of physicians.' "

Some doctors were wary—medical ethicists caution against trying new drugs without demonstrable advantages, since less is known about their risks. But in their role-playing sessions, Celexa's reps had rehearsed a ready answer to that objection: They told doctors that millions of Europeans had already taken it. And some doctors appreciate the chance to offer patients the very latest thing. Ronald Ruden, the Upper East Side doctor, says he jumps at such opportunities. "I am an early adopter," he explains. "I always want to try the newest drug to see how it works." By the day of Celexa's U.S. launch, nearly 15,000 U.S. doctors had prescribed Celexa, too.

AS CELEXA GAINED MOMENTUM, ITS RIvals struck back. Almost immediately, drug reps from rival companies began what is known in the business as counter-detailing. I even experienced some counter-detailing myself. A Paxil rep, speaking on condition of anonymity, cut into Celexa right away: "It's not a good drug in the first place, and there are more side effects," she said, adding that she warns doctors that Celexa could cause kidney problems in overdose, alluding to the beagles. (There was a report of lethal overdoses in Sweden, but it was later debunked; a Celexa overdose isn't dangerous in humans.) A Zoloft rep took another angle: "You know, there have been some data saying Celexa is no better than a placebo." (This is true but not necessarily relevant, since

WE HAPPY FEW John MacPhee and Nefertiti Green led Celexa's marketing assault.

placebos are often very powerful in relieving depression.) She called back to call Celexa a "me-too" drug (so are Zoloft and Paxil), quote from the *Medical Letter,* and describe the "tremendous pressure" Forest put on its salespeople. "They wouldn't make a bonus if they didn't sell Celexa—it was do or die for them," she said.

Part of the reason for Celexa's success may indeed be Forest's incentive bonuses. "Forest has put more of the emphasis on the incentive side," says Mark Devlin, a former Forest drug rep who is now a national sales director. As a result, Forest reps have a higher "physician call rate" than other companies, he says, attempting to visit about twenty doctors a day and "actually getting in front of about ten." (Lilly's reps, for example, see about eight a day.) But Backer, his fellow rep, insists the "counter-detailing just helps create more noise about Celexa." The Forest drug reps were armed with plenty of "clinicals" to back up their claims, she says.

"WHAT REALLY ANNOYED ME," SAYS INTERNIST ROBERT GOODMAN, "WA

Like all drug reps, Celexa's bury doctors under a blizzard of trinkets bearing their logo—umbrellas, clip boards, even Valentine's Day bouquets. "We kind of keep up with the Joneses as best we can," Devlin explains. "The pens, notepads, coffee mugs—that is something that is expected and, quite frankly, appreciated. Doctors ask for it, and we do our best to give them what is expected."

Naturally, Forest reps provide the usual assortment of lectures, small group dinners, teleconferences, and "stipends" for speaking or participating. They also offer what are known as "clinical sidebars" where doctors can pick up dinner at a restaurant to take home to their families. "You can have reasonable entertainment, something that makes it attractive to attend," Devlin says.

Dr. Jon Mohrer, the internist from Forest Hills, Queens, is one busy doctor Celexa reps called on. "There is a constant barrage of drug reps in my life here, maybe five or six a day," he says. "My policy is not to see anybody." He says he doesn't accept their gifts or literature and relies on journals and the nonprofit *Medical Letter* to check out new drugs. But it is hard to say no completely. For one thing, he sometimes accepts the free samples to save his patients money. "Sometimes the drug reps will come up and say, 'Oh, thank you so much for prescribing my drug,'" he says. "It's really annoying."

Free Lunch
www.nofreelunch

DR. NO Fed up with drug marketers, Dr. Robert Goodman started the No Free Lunch campaign.

Mohrer's staff, however, is of a different opinion. The reps cultivate the office staff in order to get closer to the doctor, and once again, the drug rep's principal weapon is a free lunch. "About once a month, I will let them come in and bring deli or pizza or something for the staff," Mohrer says. "They love it."

Mohrer says he even feels a little bit sorry for the drug reps, who sometimes seem like glorified delivery people, and he has occasionally accepted their invitations. "I could go to dinner every night with a different drug rep if I wanted to," he says. He and his wife recently attended a dinner cruise around Manhattan that featured an endocrinology lecture, and once they saw the play *Rent* with drug reps from Bristol Myers Squibb and their husbands. Until recently, Mohrer occasionally patronized "clinical sidebars," too, stopping by Pasta Lovers or a popular kosher Chinese place near his home to pick up dinner for his family. "My kids like the Chinese food," Mohrer says. "But I'm getting increasingly uncomfortable with it—I told my kids we're not going to do it anymore, and they understand."

Some doctors appreciate the reps, but they won't say so openly. "The reps provide good information, and they are functioning in a system where that is how you sell medicine," says a Connecticut psychiatrist who recently took in a Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young concert with his Zoloft rep.

One Manhattan psychiatrist who also asked not to be named says she has "learned a ton from drug reps and from their educational programs." Sure, she says, they have taken her to fancy restaurants—Daniel, Lespinasse, Windows on the World—for talks or dinners with other psychiatrists to compare notes. "They have very respected speakers. You listen, and you either buy their case or you don't," she says. Her husband, another doctor, recently turned down an invitation to Acquavit because he felt it was a conflict of interest. “We missed a good meal,” she says. “It was a conflict for him, but it wouldn’t have been a conflict for me!”

Sometimes, drug reps provide valuable insights, she says. “My Pfizer rep is terrific and comes with a loose-leaf binder full of clippings from lots of reputable journals. She has done the research for me.” The psychiatrist says she doesn’t think marketing efforts make an undue difference. “Doctors just aren’t that corruptible,” she says.

YSICIANS’ WILLINGNESS TO BE BRIBED.”

She rarely prescribes Celexa. “I don’t like it,” she says. “In my experience, Celexa causes a lot more weight gain than some of the others, and jitters. I’ve had the same results three times in a row.” Her Celexa rep recently supplied a study purporting to show less weight gain than another drug, but she wasn’t convinced.

She and her husband recently spent a drug-company-sponsored educational weekend at a resort near Lake George in the Adirondacks. Most of their time was very agreeable—good food, walks in the woods, canoeing—and only a few hours were devoted to medicine.

Those few hours, however, nearly drove her husband into a rage. The experts on hand were addressing the virtues of calcium-channel blockers, a product for treating high blood pressure. He knew research shows that calcium-channel blockers are both more expensive and less effective than other treatments. As it happens, calcium-channel blockers are also the second most heavily marketed class of drug in the U.S., after antidepressants. “Of course marketing has an influence on prescribing!” the doctor says. “Why else would these calcium-channel blockers be so widely used?”

INSIDE THE DOCTOR’S OFFICE, THE CELEXA reps’ game is a kind of small-scale one-upmanship with the other antidepressants. For one thing, the reps emphasize that its side-effect profile is “cleaner” than Prozac’s—some tests suggest that Prozac made patients jittery, while Celexa didn’t. And the reps can make a strong case that Celexa is less likely to interact with other drugs. Likewise, it leaves a patient’s system more quickly than its rivals, which makes it easier to take a patient off the drug. Forest also elected to fix the drug’s price about ten percent lower than its rivals—a big selling point with insurers. Like other drug companies, Forest also constantly churns out new findings about its drug, to help the reps get back in the door. “Some physicians need to see fresh new information every time you come in there,” says Devlin.

Questions about Celexa’s potential for sexual side effects come up a lot, Backer says. “Now, we have some data to suggest that Celexa’s sexual side effects may be a little bit less than the others’, but that is not something that we are making our main selling point; we don’t want to overpromise,” she says. “We tell them some physicians say that Celexa is somewhat less likely to lead to sexual dysfunction, but it is hard to judge, and it is different with every patient.”

The idea that Celexa may be less likely to cause sexual dysfunction, however, has come across loud and clear. As soon as she heard the name Celexa, one New York psychotherapist’s first response was “Oh, yes, the one with fewer sexual side effects.” Amy Brodkey, a Philadelphia psychiatrist, says she doesn’t see drug reps but that her colleagues have picked up the same idea from their Celexa reps. “The current evidence suggests that it doesn’t cause weight gain or sexual dysfunction to the same extent,” says Dr. Steven Erle, an Upper East Side psychiatrist who not long ago enjoyed dinner at the restaurant Daniel with a Forest drug rep. “It seems likely that when we know more, the rate of sexual dysfunction won’t be nearly as high as with Prozac or Paxil.”

Forest’s strongest evidence for Celexa’s advantages on the sexual front were presented at the annual meeting of the American College of Neuro-Psychopharmacology in December. Dr. Marcel Waldinger, of the Hague, reported the first head-to-head comparison of the sexual effects of Celexa and another antidepressant, in this case Paxil. Thirty men who suffer from premature ejaculation—ejaculating an average of about 22 seconds after entering their partners—agreed to participate in a blind test. While having sex, their partners used stopwatches to time the men’s orgasms. Paxil delayed ejaculation until after about 170 seconds on average. But the men on Celexa still lasted only about 44 seconds, a lag the authors call “clinically irrelevant.” The results, Waldinger said in a Forest press release, “should be useful to clinicians, both when treating men who complain of premature ejaculation, as well as when trying to avoid unwanted sexual side effects in patients with depression.”

Failing to inhibit premature ejaculation, however, says little about Celexa’s potential to inhibit orgasm in other people. “That just doesn’t follow,” says Dr. William Appleton, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard and author of *Prozac and the New Antidepressants.* “I haven’t found that Celexa has fewer sexual side effects, but in any event, premature ejaculation is not the issue.”

ROBERT GOODMAN, AN INTERNIST WHO works at Columbia-Presbyterian, tried for years to chase the drug reps out of his clinic. “What really annoyed me was physicians’ willingness to be bribed,” Goodman explained to me over a plate of rice and beans at a Dominican restaurant near the hospital. “Physicians, as a group, are pretty well off, but at professional conferences, they will wait in line a half an hour for a can of tennis balls or a free clock from a drug company. Then they’ll send their kids back up to get another!”

Finally, he decided to retaliate. He ordered pens, T-shirts, and coffee mugs of his own. He labeled them NO FREE LUNCH: JUST SAY NO TO DRUG REPS. Then he set up www.nofreelunch.org, an online compendium of facts and research about the influence of drug companies on medicine.

Goodman intended the site for health-care providers, but it makes disconcerting reading for patients. In one Harvard Medical School study, 85 doctors answered questions about two heavily marketed drugs, one for senile dementia and one for pain. Almost all the doctors said they relied only on academic research, but 71 percent repeated inaccurate information presented only in ads for the dementia drug. Nearly half the doctors fell into the same trap with the pain reliever.

Another surprising figure: The $10 billion the industry spends on marketing to doctors is more than the federal government pays for medical training. “It is a colossal waste!” Goodman says. “But the most comical thing is doctors’ attitudes. You will never hear a physician say, ‘This is influencing me.’ They are just so arrogant and naïve,” Goodman says.

DR. RUDEN, THE BUSY PHYSICIAN ON THE Upper East Side, says he has been happy with Celexa’s results. And he insists that marketing has “no impact” on his practice. “No one in their right mind would admit that it could have an impact on their prescribing. You must really avoid the concept of being bought off by a dinner,” Ruden says. “I mean, I can afford to go to any place I want.”

When one drug rep recently invited him to a fancy dinner, he told her, “Here is what you can do. Buy me a Mercedes and put the name of your drug on the side. I will drive it around for you.” A week later, she brought him a small present. When Ruden tore off the wrapping paper, he found a Hot Wheels toy Mercedes with the name of the drug on the side. “Size matters,” he told her. They both had a big laugh. ■

After reviving Chinatown's only black church, Suzan Johnson Cook has brought her popular ministry of spirituality and achievement home to the Bronx middle class. By Samuel G. Freedman

THE REVEREND SUZAN JOHNSON COOK FELT AWED ENOUGH just being in the Cabinet Room. In eight months as a White House fellow, eight months of nearly daily meetings in the West Wing, only once before had she been summoned to a meeting of President Clinton's top appointees. They were settling into square-back armchairs at a 22-foot mahogany table, amid busts of Washington and Franklin, oils of Jefferson and Lincoln, the brass-and-walnut clock from Harry S. Truman's presidential yacht. Just then Henry Cisneros, the secretary of Housing and Urban Development, burst into the room, cast his gaze at her—child of the Bronx, the tomboy still known by the nickname Sujay, the homegirl whose favorite exclamation is "*Dag!*"—and declared, "You're the perfect one." • Cisneros had been mulling a plan to enlist religious congregations in the battles against gangs and weapons in HUD's housing projects. Johnson Cook, he believed, was the ideal choice to be the assistant secretary who would link the federal government to the pulpits. She had built up her own Manhattan church, the Mariners' Temple, from barely a dozen congregants to a thousand. She knew how to reach the black middle class. She was already in Washington, with four months left on her term as a fellow. She was, recalls Cisneros, now president and COO of the Spanish-language television network Univision, "dramatic, magnetic, intelligent." • For Johnson Cook, the offer couldn't have been better timed. She had instantly taken to life in Washington, staying in the same high-rise as Attorney General Janet Reno, bumping into her neighbor Congressman Joseph Kennedy by the elevator bank, representing the pres-

THE GOSPEL AC

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANTONIN KRATOCHVIL

THE CHURCH LADY The Reverend Suzan Johnson Cook at her new home base, the Bronx Christian Fellowship.

CORDING TO SUJAY

ident before the National Baptist Convention, the very same black church body that had never invited her to its annual meeting as a pastor. "It was the joint," she would say later of that day in 1994 in Washington, her voice hushed and wistful. "I had the juice all around me."

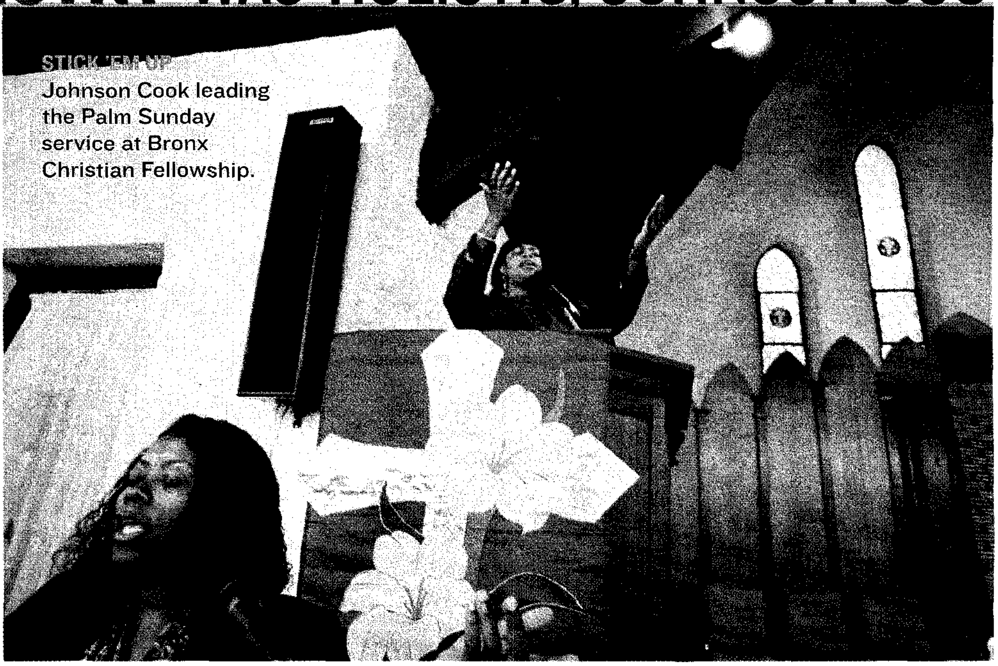
But her mind turned to the Book of Matthew, to the verses about Jesus in the wilderness being offered by Satan *all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them . . . if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* Henry Cisneros hardly qualified as Satan, but Johnson Cook was indeed being tempted by the things of this world. And like her Savior, she rejected them. When the fellowship ended, she returned to her church. Part of the decision, to be sure, had to do with rejoining her husband, Ronald, in New York. Part of it had to do with her sense of obligation to Mariners' Temple. But much of it had to do with neither. "There's no price tag you can put on the mission," she explains. "You start on it, and you keep going until you're released by God."

"WHAT DAY IS THIS?" JOHNSON COOK demands of the twenty men and women arrayed before her in a circle of folding chairs.

"This is the day the Lord had made," they answer in unison.

It is, to be precise, 6:55 A.M. on Sunday, April 2, more than an hour before she will begin the first of two worship services at her newest church, the Bronx Christian Fellowship, which the congregation bought two months ago for $600,000. A fieldstone building with slate roof and oak doors on wrought-iron hinges, it looks better suited to an English hamlet of thatch-roof cottages than to an urban village of brick duplexes and five-story apartments pressed between the Bronx River Parkway and the No. 2 El's trestle.

JESUS' MINISTRY WAS HOLISTIC, JOHNSON COO



STICK 'EM UP
Johnson Cook leading the Palm Sunday service at Bronx Christian Fellowship.

Here in the basement, Johnson Cook has gathered her leadership team, the lay volunteers who staff the church's programs for dance and music and youth, who teach in its Sunday school and manage its finances, who this past week swept out the stucco sanctuary and this linoleum-tiled social hall. She stands before them in a lime-green sweater suit, her hair set in a pert pageboy, her ankle ringed by a delicate gold chain, her five-foot-ten frame otherwise suitable for an NBA power forward.

She strides to a wall adorned with a canvas banner declaring A NEW BEGINNING IN THE BRONX and an oak-tag outline of the morning's lesson, prominently featuring the words TARGET: BLACK PROFS AND FAMILIES. Some of those professionals are sitting on the chairs in front of her—chemist James T. Jones Jr., Housing Authority site manager Venice Kendall, court officer Yvette Knighton Stevenson. They are the hidden backbone of the black community, the likes of whom Johnson Cook has brought into the fold over nearly twenty years of ministry. Now she checks their answers to a homework question: "What is your Christian job description?" After they have finished speaking of being prayerful and loyal, faithful and reliable, Johnson Cook fills in the blank herself.

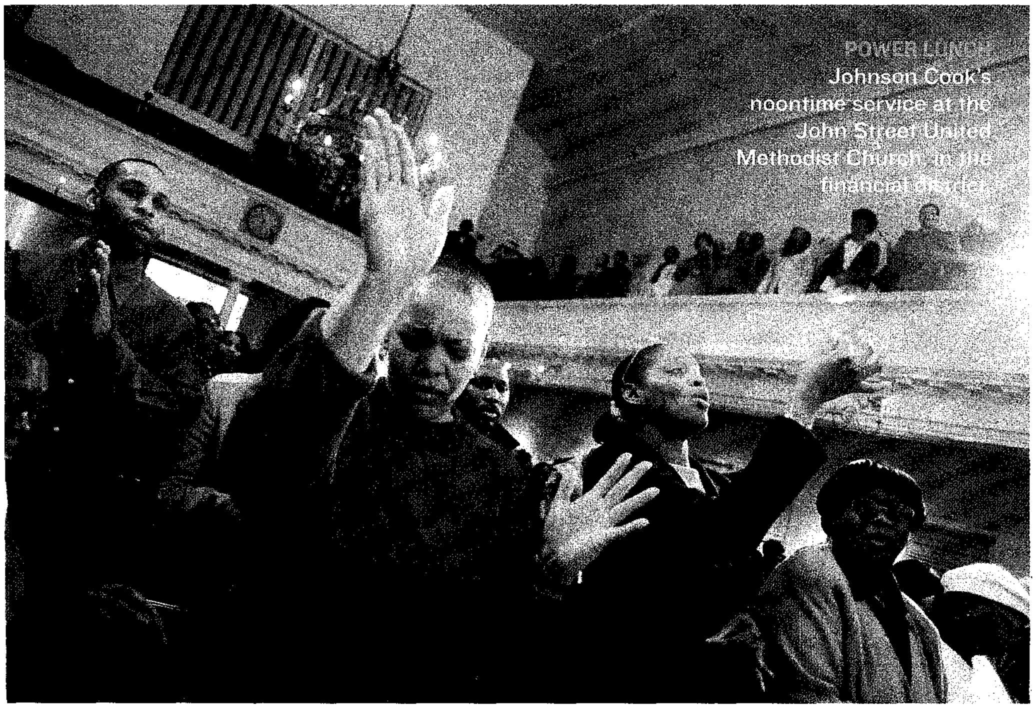
"When you think you've arrived, you're arrogant," she says, punching the air with a felt-tip marker for emphasis. "Everyone can grow. Everyone can get to the next level. You've got to get to the level where *He* needs you. Not your boss. Not the Stock Exchange. When I was at the White House, I thought I was supposed to be one of them Washington yuppies. But the Lord said, 'You are my pastor.' "

Six years after leaving Washington, Suzan Johnson Cook at 43 has achieved a singular national prominence in a career composed of one improbable choice after another: entering a ministry deeply resistant to women as pastors; spurning the status of the White House and, earlier, of a Harvard deanship, to stay with a black church in the unlikely setting of Chinatown; and then, most stunning of all by clerical standards, leaving that booming congregation to start all over again with a dozen faithful and a rented chapel in the Bronx Christian Fellowship. The dedication of the 300-family church this month marks the latest accomplishment of a minister who may just be the most important woman in that legendary institution, the black church.

Johnson Cook has led neither the first nor the largest church headed by a black woman; she has not championed a feminist theology and in certain ways has resisted it. Yet her combination of political contacts, pulpit eloquence, experience as a TV producer, and acceptance by the church's old-boy network makes her a formidable figure. She has been a police chaplain, a member of President Clinton's initiative on race, and the first woman officer in the Hampton University Ministers' Conference, the major annual meeting of black church leaders. She's written or edited five books, ranging from motivational essays to a serious theological consideration of the New Testament's women. Her burden, as much as her blessing, is the surfeit of talents competing for her attention.

"I have to determine which voice I'll listen to," Johnson Cook acknowledges. "I wrestle with that all the time. But it's got to be God's voice for me. It can't be pastoring *or.* It's got to be pastoring *and.* I decided to leave Washington because staying there would've isolated me. What makes me me is being able to touch my people."

When the 8 A.M. worship service begins, Johnson Cook, now clad in a white robe with kenté-cloth piping and holding the pulpit microphone, asks the 200



POWER LUNCH Johnson Cook's noontime service at the John Street United Methodist Church in the financial district.

AYS. "IT WAS ABOUT **MIND, BODY, *AND* SPIRIT."**

worshippers before her the same question she'd posed earlier to her church cabinet. And they, too, know just what to answer. They carry Bibles with favorite verses highlighted in yellow marker, Bibles so well-used they are held together with packing tape. Fully at ease, an athlete's swagger in her step, she runs the service by turns as concert, revival, town meeting, and stand-up comedy routine, an appropriate combination for a minister whose influences run from the Rev. Floyd Flake to the talk-show host Rosie O'Donnell. She leads a rousing version of "I Love You in the Love of the Lord" with the voice that once earned her a spot in the Apollo Theater's Amateur Night.

And when she lays into her sermon—tilting her head, clasping a microphone in one hand and kneading the air with the other—the service grows mesmerizingly personal as she considers the 23rd Psalm, the Lord's Prayer. Johnson Cook makes it speak to a middle-class black congregation that knows its own kinds of struggles and yet feels a sort of survivor's guilt in taking pleasure from success. Just back from a family vacation at Disney World, she wants to reassure them that a little bit of the "health-and-wealth gospel" can coexist with the prophetic vision of social justice.

"Got to get the kids up," she preaches, morphing effortlessly into one of the middle-class moms sitting in front of her, her voice now clipped and impatient. "Get 'em fed and dressed and off to school. Got *stuff* to deal with at work. Got to pick up the kids from school. Got to have *energy* for the husband. So I'm pooped." She pauses, letting the image penetrate, letting her listeners see themselves in her words. Then her voice softens from rasp to fleece. "The Lord is a soul-restorer. The Lord speaks to us by the still waters. Do you know recreation is restoration? Do you know 48 hours ago I was in Typhoon Lagoon in a raft?" She lets the laughter subside, then adds, "I'm *glad* to know the soul-restorer."

'MY WHOLE THEOLOGICAL understanding of Jesus is that His ministry was holistic," she explains later, "that it was about mind, body, *and* spirit. Many times, faith traditions have focused just on the spirit. But what happens after Sunday is that people have to face the realities—their bodies, their minds. So yes, my ministry does concentrate on black health and wealth. We can't just talk about what we're going to have as a people. We must achieve it. So wherever God can find a place for me and my resources, I'm there—whether it's the White House or a local congregation. I've been humbled by the opportunities God has given me, but I've also been prepared."

After the sermon, with one worship service done and another soon to begin, Johnson Cook sees a favorite member in the receiving line and asks, "What you havin' for dinner?"

"Turkey wings," the woman replies with a warmth implying an invitation.

"That's *good,*" Reverend Johnson Cook says, at ease as any man with one of the perks of the pastoring life. "I had ribs yesterday."

SUNDAY MEANT NOT MERELY church but churches during Johnson Cook's childhood. She and her older brother Charles started with Bible school and a worship service in the Eastchester Presbyterian Church near their home in the Bronx. Then they took the No. 5 train to Harlem for the 11 A.M. service at Rendall Presbyterian, where their mother belonged. Finally, they walked the ten blocks to 145th Street for worship at their father's church, Union Baptist.

The itinerary reflected the centrality of Christianity to Sujay's life, along with the influence of two parents who were in disparate ways both self-made. Wilbert T. Johnson had left Virginia in the early thirties at age 15 to support his orphaned nephews, ultimately finding his way to Harlem and a job as one of New York's first black trolley-car operators. By the time Sujay was growing up, he had opened a security-guard company in the family's basement, serving clients from salsa ballrooms to Catholic-church bazaars. Dorothy Cuthbertson, fourteen years Wilbert's junior, earned two master's degrees when it was rare enough for a black woman to attend college, and embarked on a 22-year career teaching at P.S. 194 in Harlem.

The family ethos, Johnson Cook recalls, centered on success: "You've got to achieve. Your homework has got to be impeccable. And you're not going to break a verb at the dinner table. No 'ain't.' " Both Johnson children skipped grades in school. As teenagers, both worked in the family business, he in payroll, she keeping the ledgers. Charles got into Dartmouth just as Sujay was beginning junior high at the elite Riverdale Country Day School.

Such upward mobility had its price. The Johnson family integrated its neighborhood off Gun Hill Road in 1959, and typically, there were snubs from schoolmates and the condescension of teachers who deemed Sujay incapable of handling a class trip to Spain and urged her to find a job after high school rather than tax her talents with a college education.

"I was strengthened by the struggle," she recalls of that time. "It tempered me. Know racism when you see it, identify it clearly, but be able to handle it when it comes. And that's important. A leader can't always respond by emotion. My payback came by achieving." She became fluent in Spanish, ultimately studying in Valencia for a semester. At 16 she entered Fisk University, a historically black college in Nashville, and later transferred to Emerson in Boston, where she graduated cum laude in 1976 with a degree in speech. She earned a master's in educational technology from Teachers College at Columbia, and by age 21 had cut her teeth in politics, helping her brother win election to the State Assembly, and begun her own career as a television producer on stations in Boston, Washington, and Miami.

But one day in the early eighties, she telephoned her family's pastor at Union Baptist, the Reverend Ollie B. Wells Sr. She had to meet with him on her next trip north from Miami. Night after night, she told him, she could hear God's call, like Samuel in the Bible being awakened three times by the Almighty's summons to be a prophet. "It's this insatiable desire to serve God," she remembers now, "the feeling of being chosen that you can't escape. It's nonstop."

"THE BLACK MIDDLE CLASS IS A DIFFERENT DE

"She was frightened," Wells recalls. "It was an area where women weren't accepted, and she just didn't know if she could put everything on the line. I told her to go back to Miami and pray on it. And if your faith is real, you've gotta do what Peter did. Which is step out onto the water."

Sujay had often spent summers during childhood with her aunt Martha Porcher, who worked as an assistant to the president of Barber-Scotia College in Concord, North Carolina. The summer Johnson Cook was 13, there was another houseguest, a Barber-Scotia student named Katie Cannon, who had decided to pursue the ministry. Sujay peppered her with questions. *What's a call like? How do you get ordained?* And it occurred to her that in all those Sundays of churchgoing, she had rarely seen a black woman as a minister.

By the time Johnson Cook confessed her call to Ollie Wells, Katie Cannon already had become the first black woman to earn a doctorate from Union Theological Seminary and ordination in the Presbyterian Church. Her achievement only threw the obstacles into greater relief. In the traditions of the black church, a revered woman might lead the Usher Board or the Home Missionary Society or even be extolled as a "mother of the church." But a black woman who wanted to actually *lead* a congregation had little choice but to open her own storefront church. Though the major black denominations had few formal restrictions on women in the ministry—Baptists let every member church ordain whomever it found worthy, and the African Methodist Episcopals explicitly allowed female ordination—in practice, the pulpit was a man's place and the pew was a woman's. So when Suzan Johnson Cook broke the news to her family that she was changing careers, her mother, Dorothy, a practical woman, asked across the dishes, "Are you sure this is what you want to do?"

MIDWAY THROUGH A DREARY, DRIZZLY Monday afternoon, during what should be one of the few lulls of Holy Week, Johnson Cook joins the crowd of 80 finding seats in Harlem's venerable Convent Avenue Baptist Church. Here amid the elegant brownstones of Sugar Hill, in a sanctuary replete with hand-carved altar rails and light fixtures styled on antique gas lamps, gather the clerical elite who form the regional Baptist Ministers' Conference. Until the mid-nineties, its constitution barred women, and even at this recent session Johnson Cook is the only female pastor.

Nothing in her manner, though, suggests the slightest discomfort. In the church lobby, she chats with Jacques DeGraff, a friend of her older brother's who is a veteran political consultant as well as an aspiring preacher. She lines him up for a couple of sermons at Bronx Christian Fellowship, planting the idea that he might collaborate in the television ministry she is developing. A fellow preacher, meanwhile, asks Johnson Cook to participate in the conference's program for Martin Luther King Day in 2001.

"That is the Baptist golf course," she says as she leaves. "A lot of the sisters don't understand it's not just about being invited to this pulpit or that conference. It's these informal things. And I'm in the loop."

Her journey into the loop began in December 1980, when Wells licensed her as a minister, the first step toward ordination. Nine months later, she entered Union Theological Seminary, and as James Forbes, the celebrated minister of Riverside Church, taught her the eloquent art of homiletics, Wells appointed her youth minister. When he ordained Johnson Cook on March 6, 1982, halfway through her seminary studies, he did so under the aegis not of the black National Baptist Convention but of the overwhelmingly white American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York/USA—which black congregations join primarily for its pension benefits and publishing house.

ONE YEAR LATER THE MARINERS' Temple invited Johnson to become interim pastor. On the surface, the position looked impressive. Founded in 1795, Mariners' was the oldest Baptist church in New York and had been led by 25 consecutive men. But within the imposing pillars, Johnson discovered on her first Sunday in the pulpit, fifteen worshippers languished in a sanctuary built for 1,100. The annual heating bill alone, some $40,000, exceeded the church's income. Deep inside Chinatown, Mariners' was a black church in a neighborhood without blacks. Week after week, Johnson Cook watched male preachers deliver their audition sermons for the pastor's job—and quickly head for the door.

"They'd say, 'Girl, this is not me. You can have it if you want it,' " she recalls. "But I refused to think of Mariners' as a defeated place. I wasn't going there just to close it down." The impediments, she soon discovered, very much included her gender. One minister refused to baptize candidates in the same font Johnson Cook had used. Another had her preach at his church—and pad out his own paltry congregation with her adherents—only to follow her sermon with a denunciation of female ordination.

Using the skills she had acquired in Charles's campaign for the Assembly, Johnson Cook went door-to-door with a handful of loyalists in the Lower East Side's housing projects, spreading the word of her ministry. Within six months, she had lifted membership to 150 and won full-time appointment in a unanimous vote, making her the first black woman to be a senior pastor in the American Baptist denomination. The area may not have been home to many blacks, but plenty of middle-class people like her parents worked in the neighborhood's government offices. Sujay inaugurated the "Lunch Hour of Power," a worship service every Wednesday at noon that was equal parts theology, sing-along, and motivational lecture. By 1990, it was drawing 500 regulars, a number equal to her Sunday congregation, and inspiring similar services by such renowned black ministers as Johnny Ray Youngblood of Saint Paul Community Baptist Church in Brooklyn. (The service is now held nearby, at the John Street United Methodist Church.)

Indeed, Youngblood gave her what she considered the ultimate nod of acceptance. “Sujay,” he told her while both were studying in the same doctoral program in the late eighties, “you’re part of the frat.” The daughter and sister of strong black men—and, since 1991, the wife of one—she had met the black church’s most concrete measure of achievement. The same credential plainly mattered to the Clinton administration when it chose Johnson Cook first as a White House fellow and then as one of just seven members of the president’s Initiative on Race and Reconciliation.

At the same time, Johnson Cook served black women less as a crusader than as a role model. She mentored younger ministers, including her successor at Mariners’ Temple. She delivered, by her own reckoning, the majority of her sermons on biblical women, from the warrior and prophetess Deborah to the New Testament’s Anna, a widow who waited until she was 84 to see the Messiah arrive.

In the five books she wrote or edited, Johnson Cook particularly addressed black women in the middle class and the professions. She is president of the New York Coalition of 100 Black Women, a sort of modern version of what W.E.B. DuBois famously called the “Talented Tenth.” Her collection of devotions, *Sister Strength,* included a section on “Surviving in Corporate America.” Asked to name the most influential book she’s read, model turned restaurateur Barbara Smith cites Johnson Cook’s *Too Blessed to Be Stressed*, a thoughtful autobiography hiding behind a self-help title.

“I want women to take advantage of whatever crack the door has been opened,” Johnson Cook says. “And when you do that, you have no time for whining. You’re too busy doing.”

STILL, THE SO-CALLED STAINED-GLASS CEILING often restricts black women to the smallest congregations; those who lead larger churches typically have had to build them. The question about Suzan Johnson Cook, says the Reverend Delores Carpenter, a professor at Howard University who has researched the subject extensively, is why, given her track record, none of the populous megachurches have called her. It’s the rare inquiry that makes Johnson Cook bristle. She is equally bothered by the suggestion that her ministry, precisely because she is so eclectically talented, lacks the focus on a particular cause that has made Flake a national figure in school vouchers and Youngblood one in community organizing.

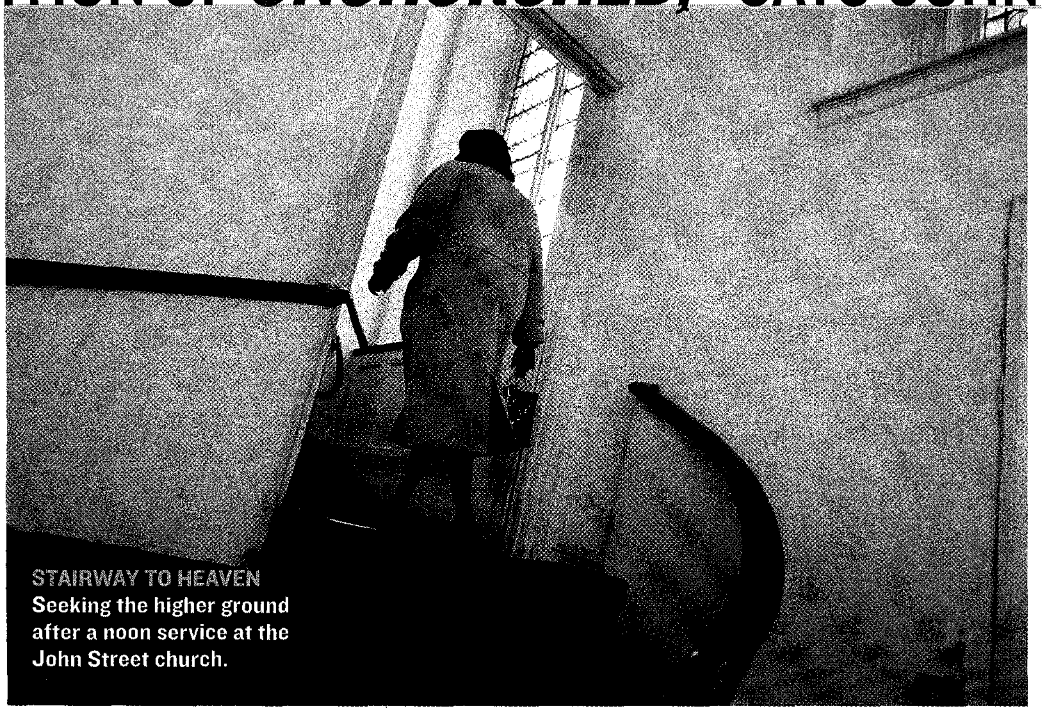
“It’s not a matter of being all over the place,” she says of her calling. “Jesus was a multitasker.” She sees affluent blacks drifting away from church, and away from the inner-city neighborhoods that desperately need their expertise and example.

“The black middle class is a different definition of *unchurched,*” she says. “My generation was born to parents who migrated from the rural South and went through the civil-rights movements. And a lot of us left the traditions that got them over. We didn’t raise our children with a connection to church. It was ‘country.’ It reminded us of the past. It took away Sundays, when now we’re invited to play golf or tennis. But if you can excite the professionals, the people with resources, that’s how real change can occur.”

Johnson Cook’s program for Bronx Christian Fellowship is duly diverse. She is using her fluency in Spanish to draw Hispanic worshippers who have tended to be culturally and denominationally outside the black church. Her career-training programs, including one for the Internet economy, have already won a $100,000 grant from USA Networks.

The Bronx pulpit also lets Johnson Cook stay close to home and family, in the same Grand Concourse high-rise as her mother. After nearly a lifetime in this city, she can still stroll up 145th Street in Harlem, near her mother’s old school and her father’s old church, and be hailed as Wilbert’s or Dorothy’s daughter. She juggles her schedule around her older son’s baseball games. She met her husband, a community-development director at Convent Avenue Baptist Church, when both were making a Lenten fast, and Ron’s own intimate understanding of the church makes him a vital sounding board.

ITION OF ***UNCHURCHED,”*** SAYS JOHNSON COOK.



STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN
Seeking the higher ground after a noon service at the John Street church.

So on Monday afternoon of Holy Week, Johnson Cook leaves the Baptist Ministers’ Conference shortly before four o’clock to head for her Toyota sport utility vehicle, its floor and seats covered by a tennis racket, a Grover doll, a tangerine, and other detritus of domesticity. She will pick up her older son, 7-year-old Samuel, at an Episcopal school in Morningside Heights and take him to join his brother Christopher, 5, at a birthday party in a craft store on the Upper West Side. In the school bathroom, she hastily changes from the conservative skirt she very deliberately wore to the ministers’ conference into casual pants.

In her personal balancing act as much as in her public ministry, Sujay practices patience as a “strategy for the long run.

“We trust God to bring good things to pass,” she adds. “We bring a quiet strength. What Martin Luther King said about knowing that we as a people will get into the Promised Land—that’s the theology that carries us over. When I get the nod from God, nothing will stop me from going forth on that mission. The scripture that sustains me is Matthew 5:16: to be light in the midst of darkness.” ▬

What's My

Bruce Vilanch has been feeding funny words to big stars for years. With *Almost Famous,* he finally gets his own say.

By Joanne Kaufman

FOUR PEOPLE RECOGNIZE BRUCE Vilanch as he walks from 20th Street, where he's rehearsing his one-man show, *Bruce Vilanch: Almost Famous,* to 21st Street, where he's got a costume fitting. This doesn't count the folks whose eyebrows race for their hairlines at the very sight of him in a form-fitting Betty Boop T-shirt, one of 1,500 in his collection.

"By the end of the run, I may have to scratch out the *Almost,*" says Vilanch, 52, a wide and wise guy whose beard, blond mop, and signature candy-colored glasses give him the look of an escapee from the Jim Henson workshop.

"Saw the video last night," a young man hollers, referring to *Get Bruce!,* the 1999 documentary chronicling his life as the comedy scribe of choice for everyone, as he puts it, from ABBA to Zadora—who requires *le joke juste* to gild appearances at all-star tributes, galas, and benefits and on concert tours, talk shows, and awards shows. He's been a writer for the past dozen Academy Awards, twice winning Emmys—another extravaganza that routinely gets Bruce, as do the Grammy, Tony, Screen Actors Guild, and World Music awards. "Everything except the American Bulimia Awards," he says. "But if Calista calls . . ."

In an earlier era, Vilanch would have been *tummler*-in-chief on variety shows, all now replaced by award shows and what Daniel Boorstin once called "pseudo-events." Thus, his résumé includes "You Made Me Watch You," the touching valedictory Bette Midler crooned as a send-off to Johnny Carson; several of Billy Crystal's show-starting—and show-stopping—Oscar salutes ("Those eyes / those thighs / surprise! / it's *The Crying Game,*" sung to the tune of "The Tender Trap"); and, rather more notoriously, the material Ted Danson performed in blackface at a 1993 Friars Club roast of his then-girlfriend, Whoopi Goldberg.

On such occasions, things can shift with amazing speed from "Get me Bruce" to "Get me Bruce's head on a platter." "There are no cinches, no dead-bang certainties," Vilanch says. "I can pretend it doesn't make any difference, but you don't get to weigh 250 pounds by not caring. I mean, there's a cannelloni behind every one of those jokes that didn't make it."

"Are you the gentleman from *Hollywood Squares?*" asks an elderly fellow.

Gentleman? "Yeah, that gave me pause, too," says Vilanch, who's head writer on the syndicated game show as well as one of the squares.

Vilanch, who'd been doing a comedy act in Los Angeles on and off for the past nine years, brought a revamped version into town partly to take advantage of the double hit of attention from *Get Bruce* and *Hollywood Squares,* partly to shut up some pals. "People were always saying, 'Well, *you* get up and do this stuff. See how you like going out there and bombing,' and I said, 'Okay, I'll try.' "

"Bruce is a very entertaining guy, so it should do very well and he shouldn't worry about the critics," counsels his friend Nathan Lane. Thus far, Vilanch has resisted asking Lane or other famous cronies for help—"I haven't said, 'Do you think I should do the strip or the patriotic tableau?' "—though Bette Midler offered to get involved. "I could direct Bruce's act," she says. "I *am* Bruce's act. I just hope the house is big enough for him. But," she adds, "I don't think he should give up his day job. He's making a *fortune.*"

Bruce describes *Almost Famous,* which opens May 11 at the Westbeth Theatre, as "a saga of my life in the comedy gulag. I don't really do stand-up. I'll be standing up, but it's as more of a raconteur.

"It's stories and songs and behind-the-scenes dish," he adds, alternately swigging diet Dr Pepper and crunching potato chips. "The only thing missing is my nightmare descent into booze and pills, which I'm hoping to have between now and the opening. I'm working on it so I can have a *Behind the Music* special of my very own."

THE ONLY CHILD OF AN OPTOMETRIST FATHER and a mother with thwarted showbiz ambitions, Vilanch grew up in Paterson, New Jersey, where his first—and enduring—passion was theater. "My mother said I learned to read looking at movie ads. The first word I learned was *mayo,* which she said was Virginia Mayo, but it could have been mayonnaise."

Vilanch's is the classic story of the overweight, klutzy kid who discovers that humor can be an effective bully-repellent. At performing-arts camp in the Berkshires, and in subsequent summer-stock productions, he was invariably cast as the chubby sidekick—Nicely-Nicely Johnson in *Guys and Dolls,* Ali Hakim in *Oklahoma,* Marryin' Sam in *L'il Abner.* "I didn't get the girl," he says. "I didn't get the *guy,*" he adds, never coy about being gay. "I was always out. Years ago, I read a comment by Merle Miller that a fag is a homosexual gentleman who's just left the room. And I thought, *If they're going to make fag jokes, they're going to have to make them to my face.*"

A onetime entertainment reporter for the Chicago *Tribune*—"He could get absolutely anyone to talk to him," recalls a former colleague—Vilanch saw his career path change when he wrote a glowing review of the then-unknown Midler, who was performing at a local club. "She liked the column," he recalls. "I met her and told her she should talk more in her act, and she said, 'You got any lines?' "

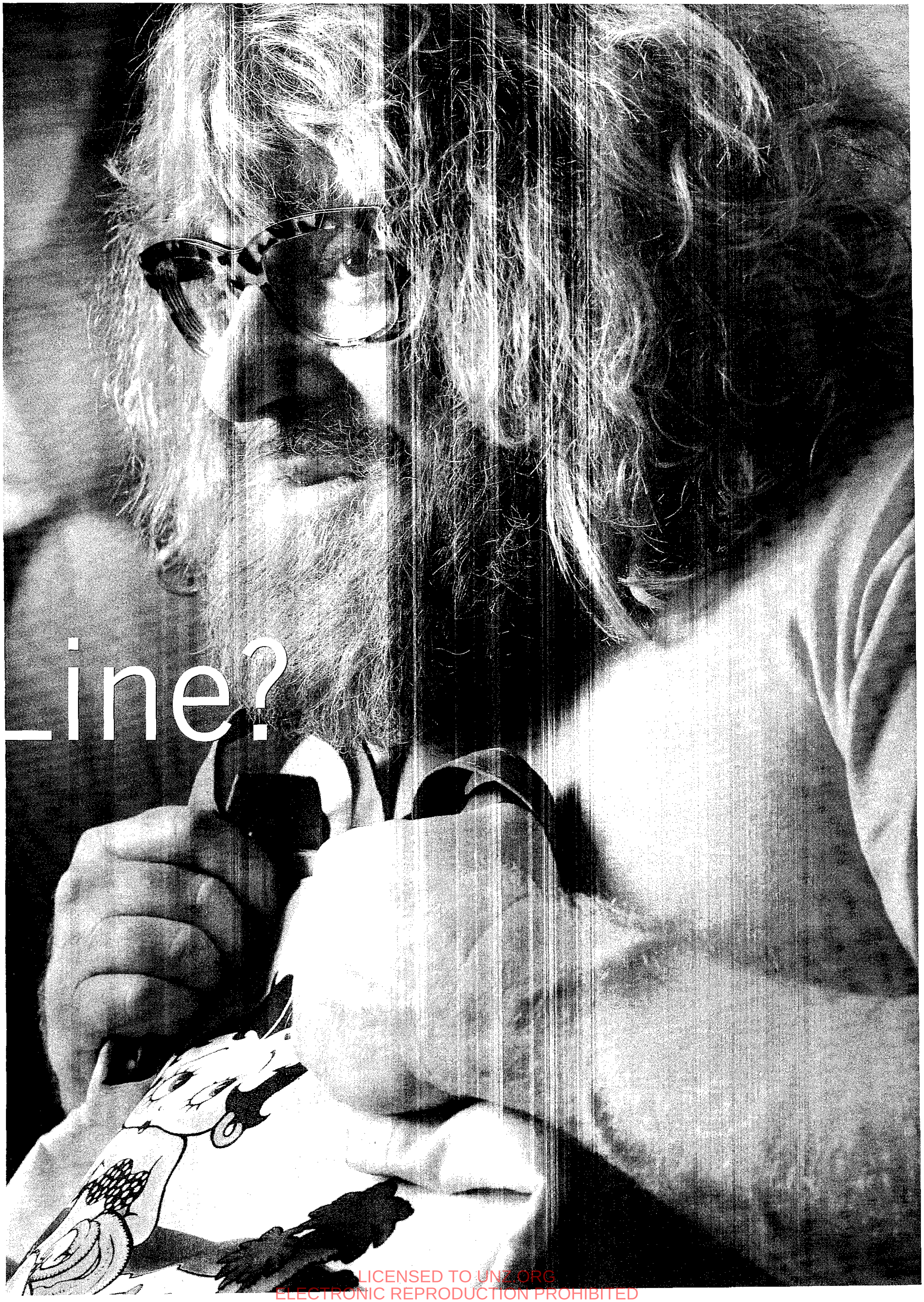
"I used to think I was going to be Neil Simon. Everything I was doing was a preparation for that," says Vilanch, who's written and doctored a number of movies, among them *Can't Stop the Music,* and the 1978 Broadway flop *Platinum.* "But after a while I realized, *This is not preparation. This is it.* I think it didn't really hit until they came to me to do the documentary and I said, 'Why? I haven't done anything yet.' And they said, 'You've done this and that and the other thing,' and I realized I'd made a career for myself and that it's unique, and I thought, *I guess I'm not going to become Neil Simon.*"

He has settled, instead, for becoming a comedy éminence blond. "You have to have an ear for how people sound and for their rhythm," he says, "and you have to do your homework, clock their sensibility. Fortunately, I have a knack for that."

The playwright Vilanch once thought he wanted to be, he says, "has a much harder job. He has to invent all those voices. The voices are all given to me. I just have to find them and write to them.

"On the other hand," he observes resignedly, "if you're a playwright, the characters don't bite you back. I don't think Hamlet ever said to Shakespeare, ' "To be or not to be?" What *is* this crap?' " ■

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NIGEL PARRY

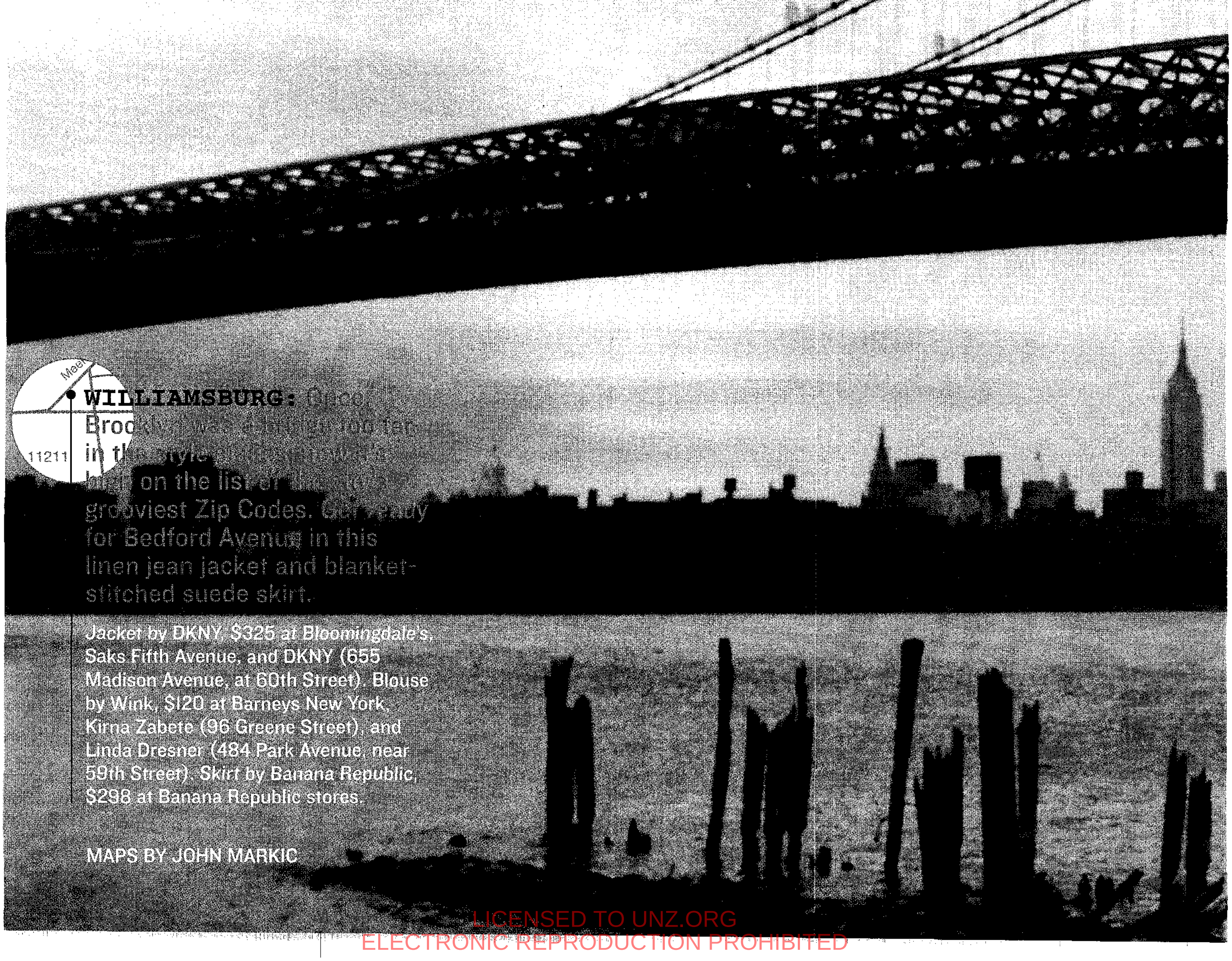

Line?

Hip Codes

Take a sartorial trip around the city in some of spring's coolest clothes—great items that, at prices ranging from $50 to $500, will still leave you plenty of cash for your Metrocard.

By Mark Holgate

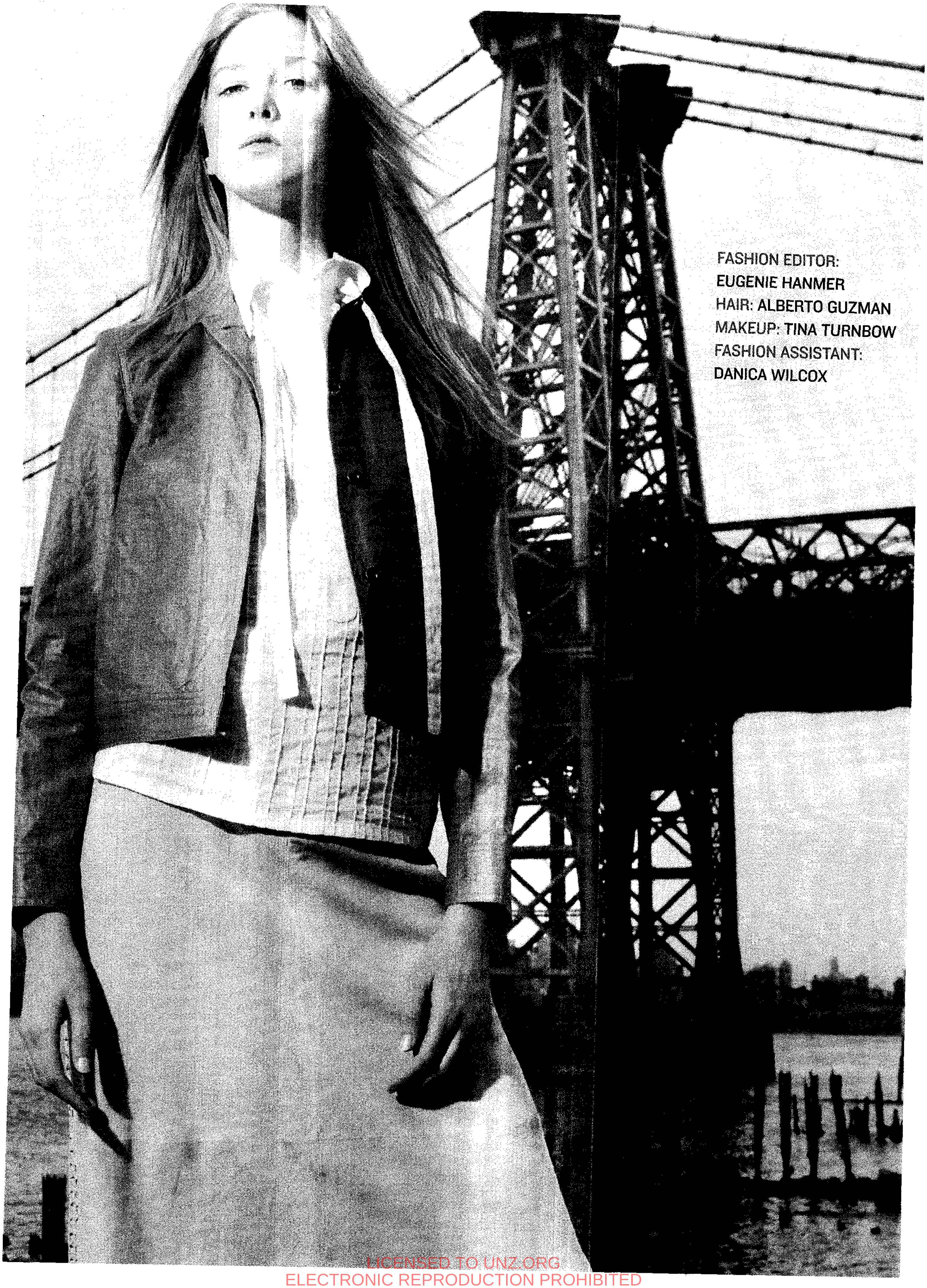
PHOTOGRAPHED BY WALTER SASSARD



WILLIAMSBURG: Once, Brooklyn was a bridge too far in the style stakes; now it's high on the list of the city's grooviest Zip Codes. Get ready for Bedford Avenue in this linen jean jacket and blanket-stitched suede skirt.

Jacket by DKNY, $325 at Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Avenue, and DKNY (655 Madison Avenue, at 60th Street). Blouse by Wink, $120 at Barneys New York, Kirna Zabete (96 Greene Street), and Linda Dresner (484 Park Avenue, near 59th Street). *Skirt* by Banana Republic, $298 at Banana Republic stores.

MAPS BY JOHN MARKIC



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FASHION ASSISTANT:
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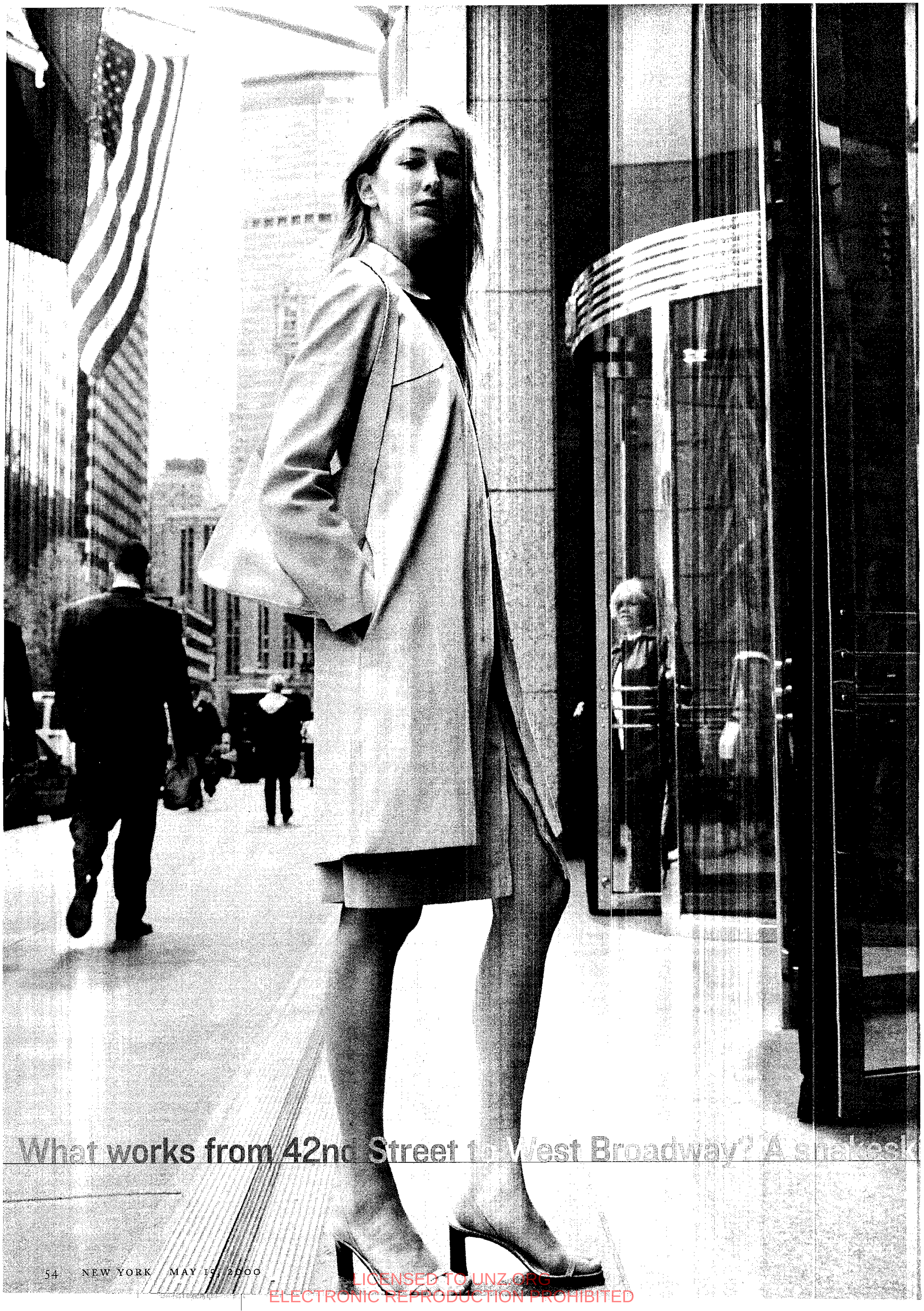
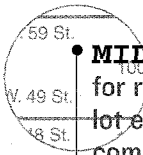
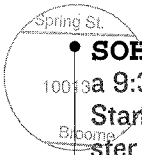


What works from 42nd Street to West Broadway? A snakesk



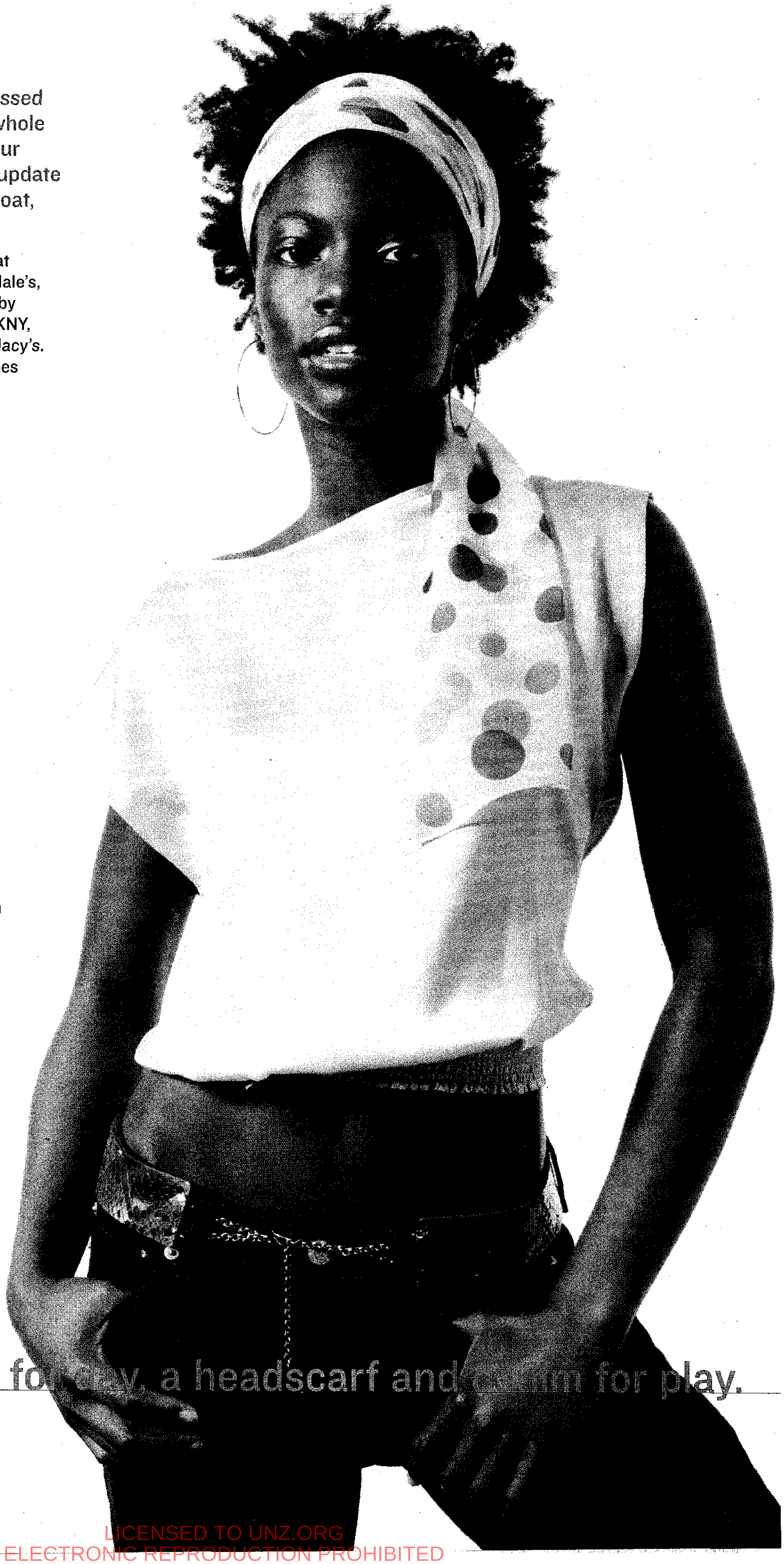
MIDTOWN: *Getting dressed* for rush hour just got a whole lot easier. Sharpen up your commute with a snappy update of the office uniform of coat, dress, and heels.

Trench coat by Theory, $470 at Bergdorf Goodman, Bloomingdale's, and Saks Fifth Avenue. Dress by cK, $325 at Macy's. Bag by DKNY, $282 at Bloomingdale's and Macy's. Sandals by cK, $155 at cK Shoes and Bags (133 Prince Street).



SOHO: You've booked a 9:30 table at Canteen. Stand out from the hipster crowd with a pair of lean denims, a head scarf, and a belt that delivers a flash of gold and snakeskin.

Top by Daryl K, $190 at Daryl K (21 Bond Street). Jeans by Polo Jeans Co. Ralph Lauren, $58 at Lord & Taylor and Macy's. Scarf by Coach, $48 at Coach (595 Madison Avenue, at 57th Street). Belt by DKNY, $55 at DKNY (655 Madison Avenue, at 60th Street). Earrings by Agatha Paris, $58 at Agatha stores.



ag and a raincoat for day, a headscarf and denim for play.

daisy
4.99
6.99
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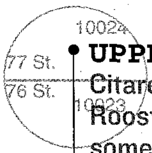
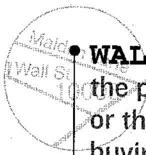
3.99



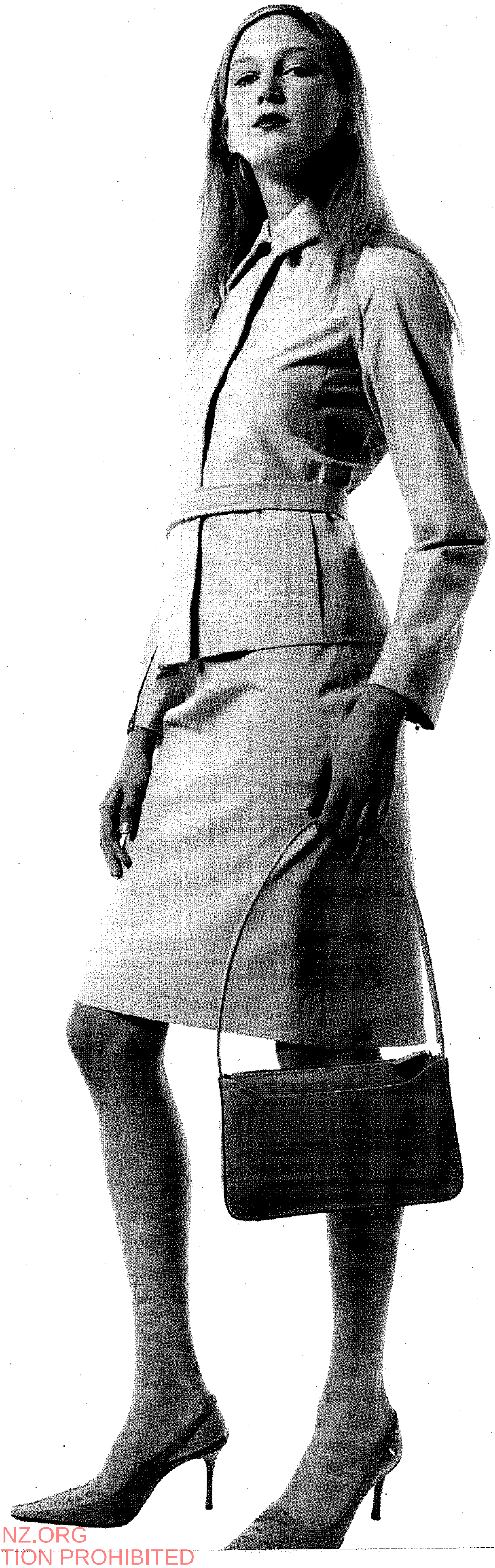
UPPER WEST SIDE: Citarella for cheesecake, Rooster Flowers for tulips, something intoxicating from Acker, Merrall & Condit, and you've got the ingredients for a perfect evening.

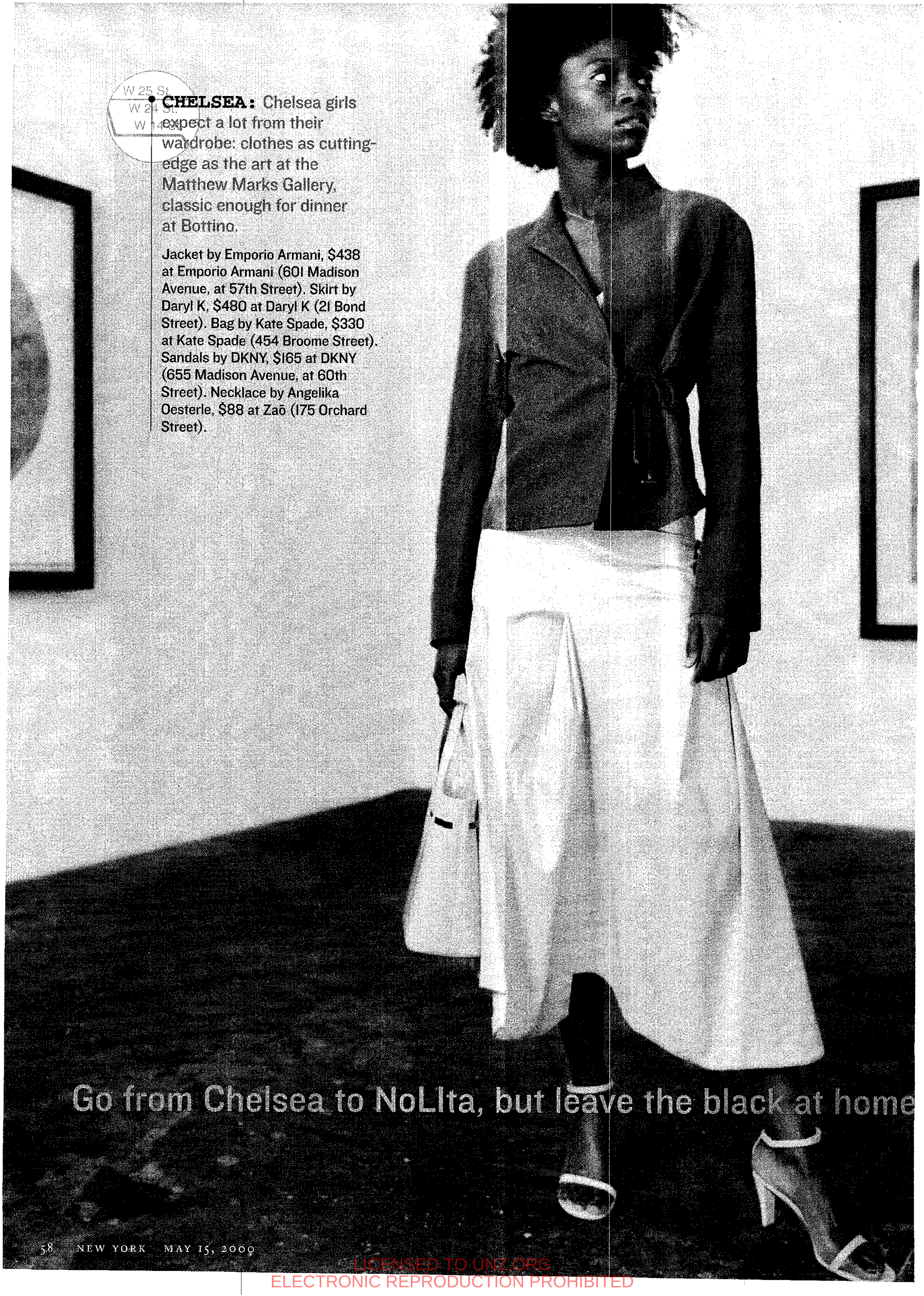
Coat by Philosophy di Alberta Ferretti, $476 at Philosophy di Alberta Ferretti (452 West Broadway). Trousers by Club Monaco, $99 at Club Monaco stores. Sweater by J.Crew, $58 at J.Crew stores. Shoes by Kate Spade, $172 at Kate Spade (454 Broome Street). Bag, $348, watch, $450, dog collar, $42, and leash, $48, all by Coach at Coach (595 Madison Avenue, at 57th Street).



WALL STREET: Whatever the performance of the NASDAQ or the Dow, it's always worth buying into blue-chip looks. Invest in a belted skirt suit, and you'll be getting returns right through fall.

Jacket, $425, and skirt, $175, both by cK at Bloomingdale's and Macy's. Bag by Kenneth Cole, $130 at Kenneth Cole stores. Shoes by Giuseppe Zanotti Design, $320 at Bergdorf Goodman.

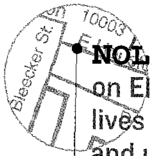



W 25 St.
W 24 St.

Go from Chelsea to NoLIta, but leave the black at home

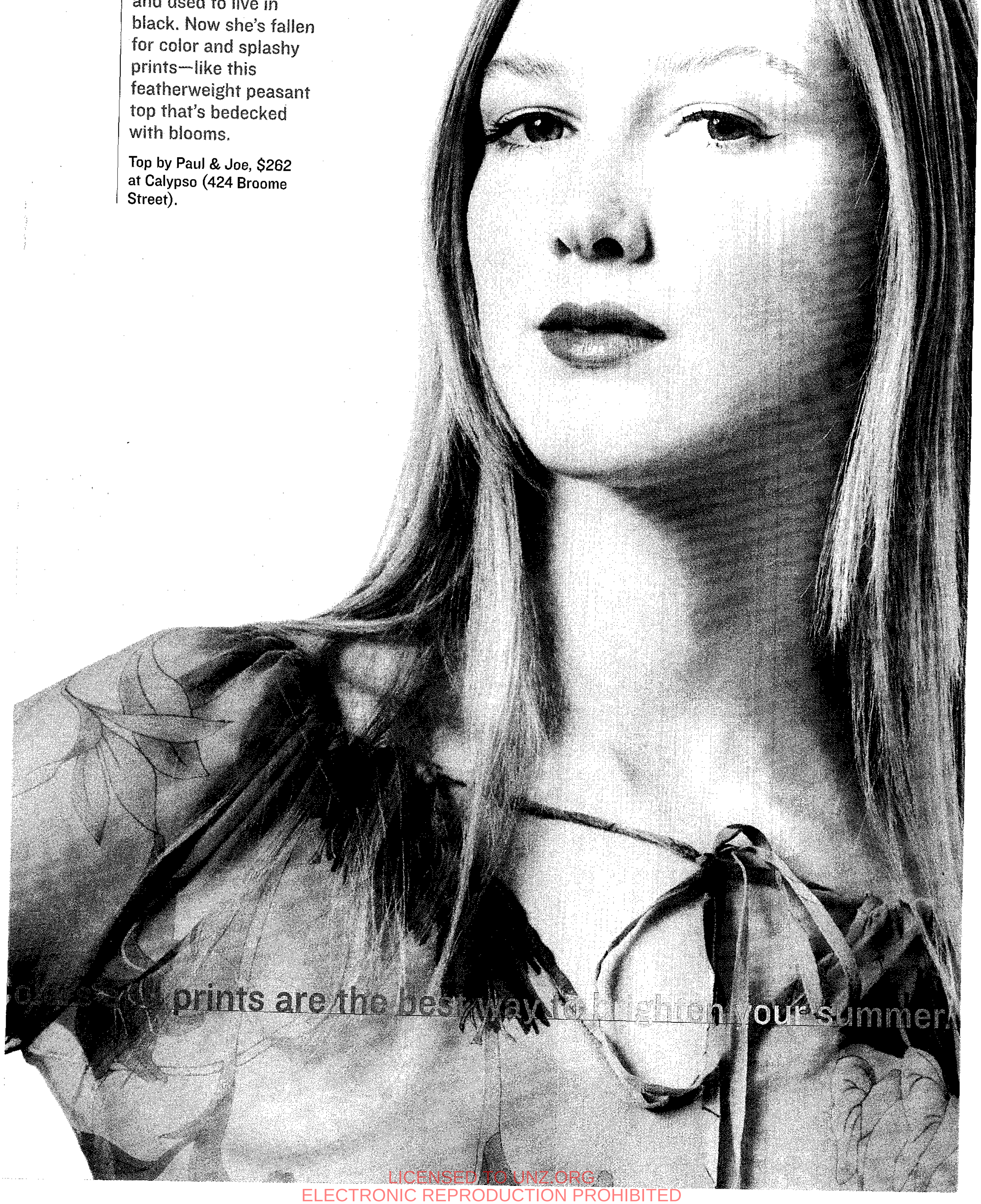
CHELSEA: Chelsea girls expect a lot from their wardrobe: clothes as cutting-edge as the art at the Matthew Marks Gallery, classic enough for dinner at Bottino.

Jacket by Emporio Armani, $438 at Emporio Armani (601 Madison Avenue, at 57th Street). Skirt by Daryl K, $480 at Daryl K (21 Bond Street). Bag by Kate Spade, $330 at Kate Spade (454 Broome Street). Sandals by DKNY, $165 at DKNY (655 Madison Avenue, at 60th Street). Necklace by Angelika Oesterle, $88 at Zaō (175 Orchard Street).

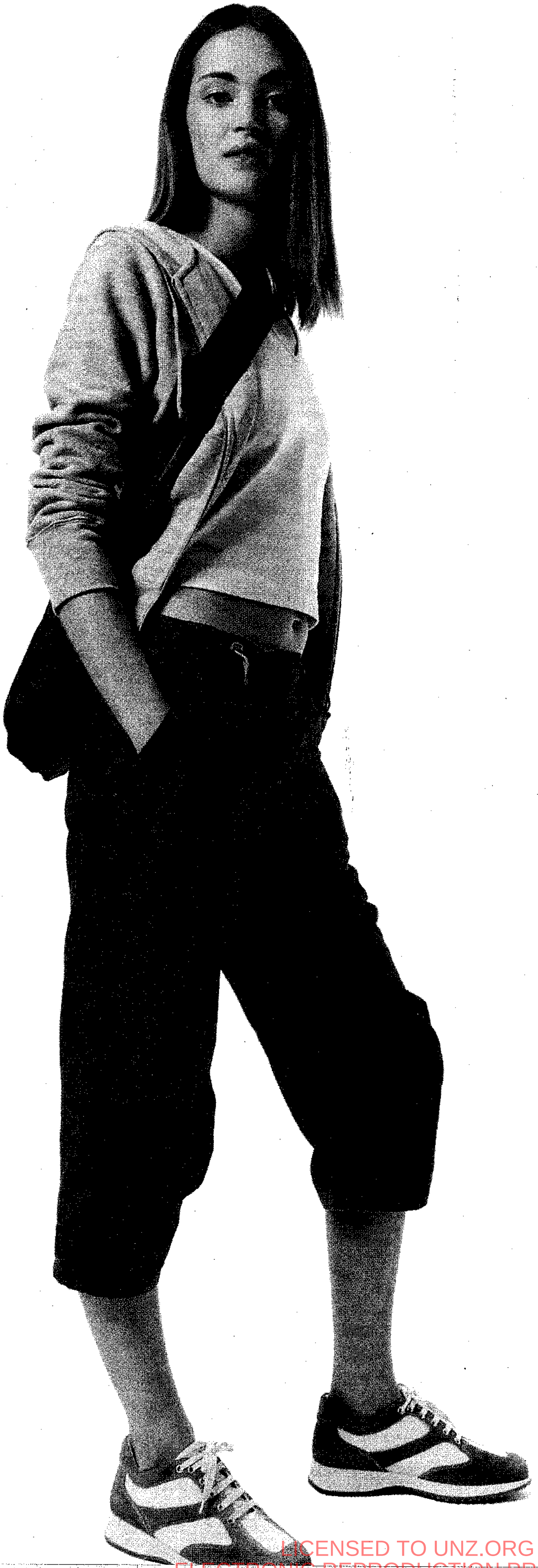


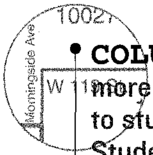
NOLITA: She lives on Elizabeth Street, lives for Café Gitane, and used to live in black. Now she's fallen for color and splashy prints—like this featherweight peasant top that's bedecked with blooms.

Top by Paul & Joe, $262 at Calypso (424 Broome Street).



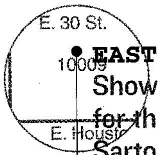
[illegible] prints are the best way to brighten your summer.





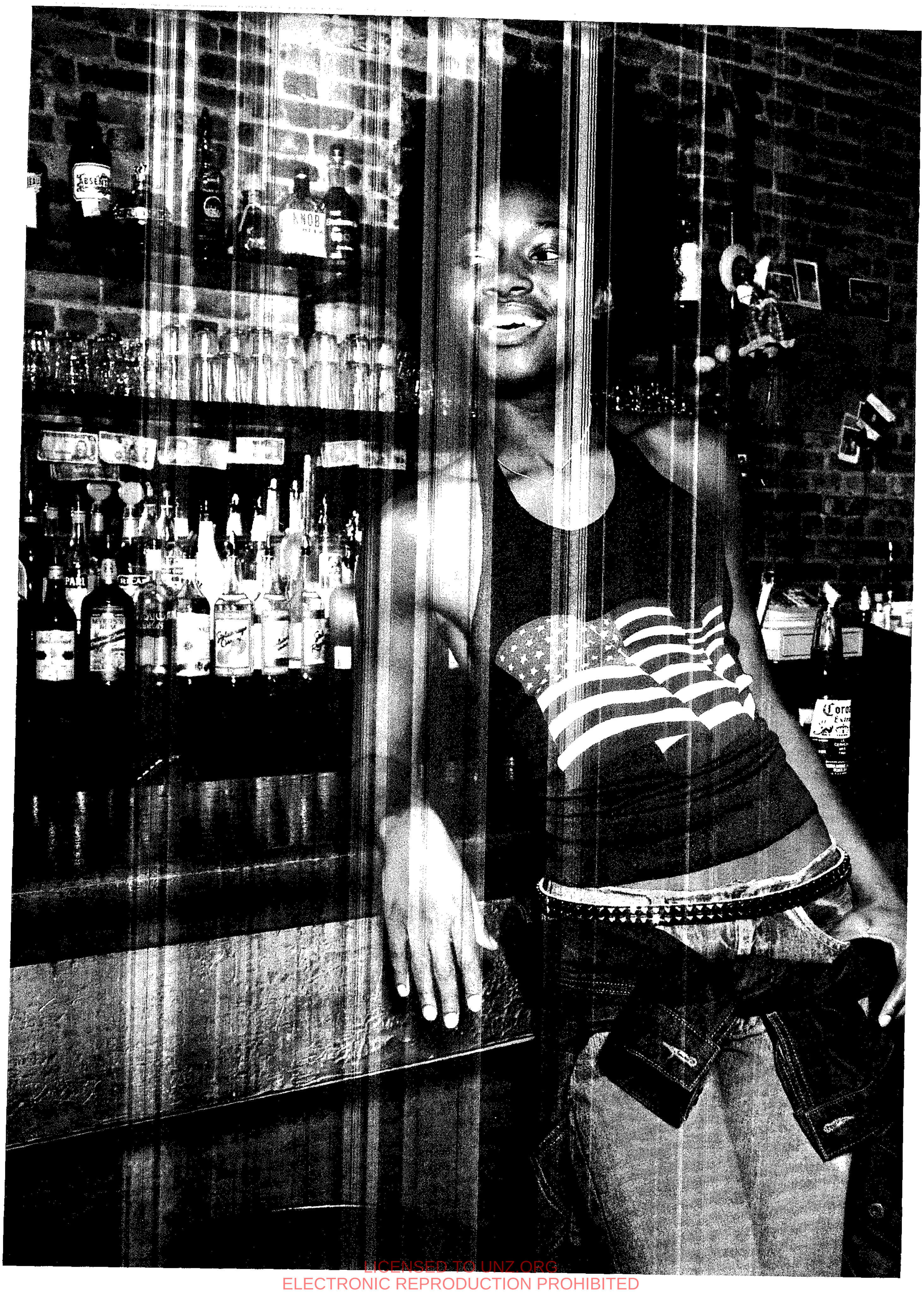
COLUMBIA: There's more than one way to study the classics. Student perennials—hooded sweatshirts, T-shirts, cropped pants—will make the grade worn with a pair of hip Hogan sneakers.

Sweatshirt, $38 by Gap at Gap stores. Trousers, $26.50 by Old Navy at Old Navy stores. T-shirt, $44, and bag, $78, both by A|X Armani Exchange at A|X Armani Exchange stores. Shoes by Hogan, $275 at Bergdorf Goodman and Saks Fifth Avenue.



EAST VILLAGE: Showing the flag isn't just for the Fourth of July: Sartorial patriotism fits for a night out at Alphabet City's Barazza too.

Top by 2 Jeans by Katayone Adeli, $70 at Barneys New York, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Intermix stores. Jacket by Guess?, $58 at Bloomingdale's, Macy's, and Guess stores. Jeans by Gap, $42 at Gap stores. Belt by DKNY, $30 at DKNY (655 Madison Avenue, at 60th Street).



BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

BY CORKY POLLAN

Main Squeeze

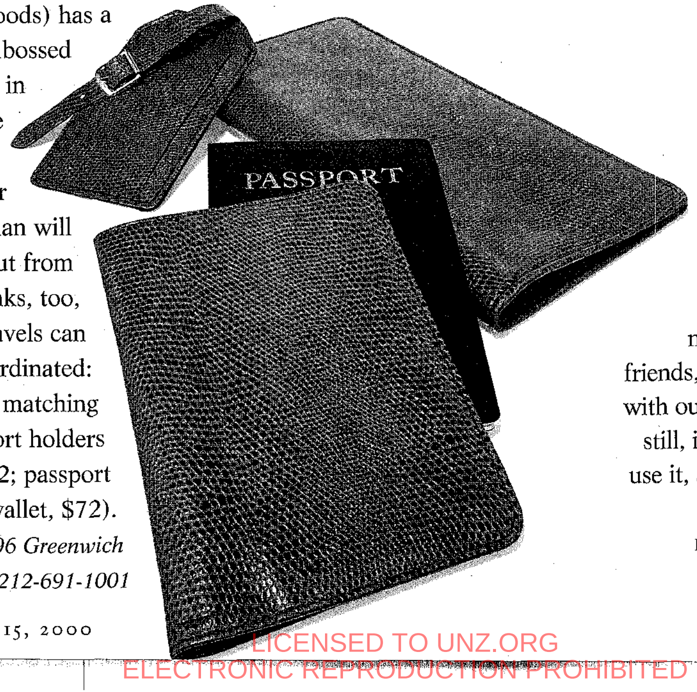
A posh squeegee? Well, when it's InterDesign's classy redo, that adjective applies. This Ohio company has been creating innovative bath products for more than 25 years: The current phobia over streaks and grime on shower doors led to the creation of this stainless-steel beaut. It's guaranteed not to rust, and it will leave your shower (mirrors too) spotless ($12).

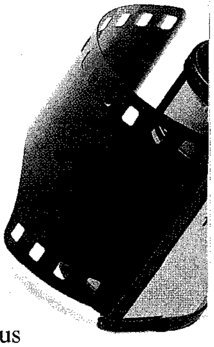
MXYPLYZYK/*125 Greenwich Avenue/212-989-4300*

Tag Team

Your grandmother probably tied a silk rose on the handle of her Ventura suitcase to distinguish it from others on the luggage carousel. Raika (a California designer of small leather goods) has a better way—embossed lizard luggage tags in sassy colors. They're eye-catching and rather swank, so your black rolling Pullman will immediately stand out from all the clones. Thanks, too, to Raika, your travels can now be color-coordinated: The company makes matching ticket and passport holders (luggage tag, $12; passport holder, $30; travel wallet, $72).

FLIGHT 001/*96 Greenwich Avenue/212-691-1001*

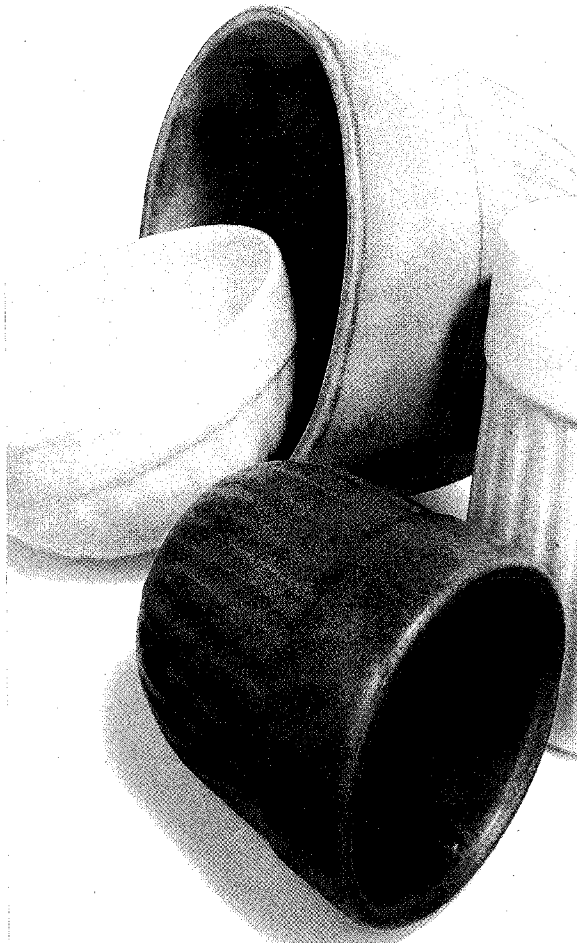




Sharp Shooter

Yashica's Socius weighs in at 4.2 ounces, making it the world's lightest 2X zoom camera around; it's also one of the smallest. Yet the Socius offers more than just the convenience of fitting in your shirt pocket: It has five flash modes (among them red-eye reduction and night portrait), three print sizes (including panoramic), and a full array of functions (like double portrait, which means if you want a pic of you and your friends, simply hold the camera in front of you with outstretched arms and click away). Better still, it doesn't require an advanced degree to use it, and the resulting photos are superior to those of most other compacts ($199).

B & H PHOTO/*420 Ninth Avenue, near 33rd Street/212-444-5000*

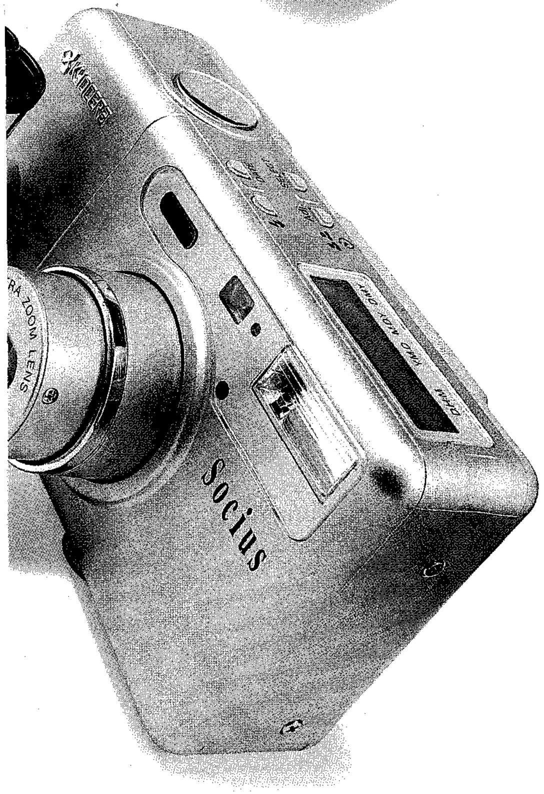


The Clay's the Thing

TriBeCa potter Judy Jackson's pared-down ceramics owe a debt to the Arts and Crafts movement: The organic shapes and matte glazes that distinguish that aesthetic infuse her work. She calls her ribbed tumblers and stacking mixing bowls the Basics, and they're so adaptable no kitchen should be without some (from $15 for a small tumbler to $35 for a large mixing bowl).

AERO LTD./*132 Spring Street/212-966-1500*

HILFIGER
TOMMY HILFIGER
FRAME CHINA
8214



High-Grade Specs

Tommy Hilfiger's new specs are sure to be deemed buzzworthy by the post-Pokémon set. They come in all the must-have styles: metal-rimmed, two-tone plastic, sport wrap, aviator, pastel lenses. But parents will like them, too, since they offer 100 percent UV protection and their polycarbonate lenses are shatterproof. Hilfiger's sunglasses are so sensibly priced, parents may even spring for more than a single pair ($17).

SUNGLASS HUT/*740 Broadway, at Astor Place/212-420-0702*

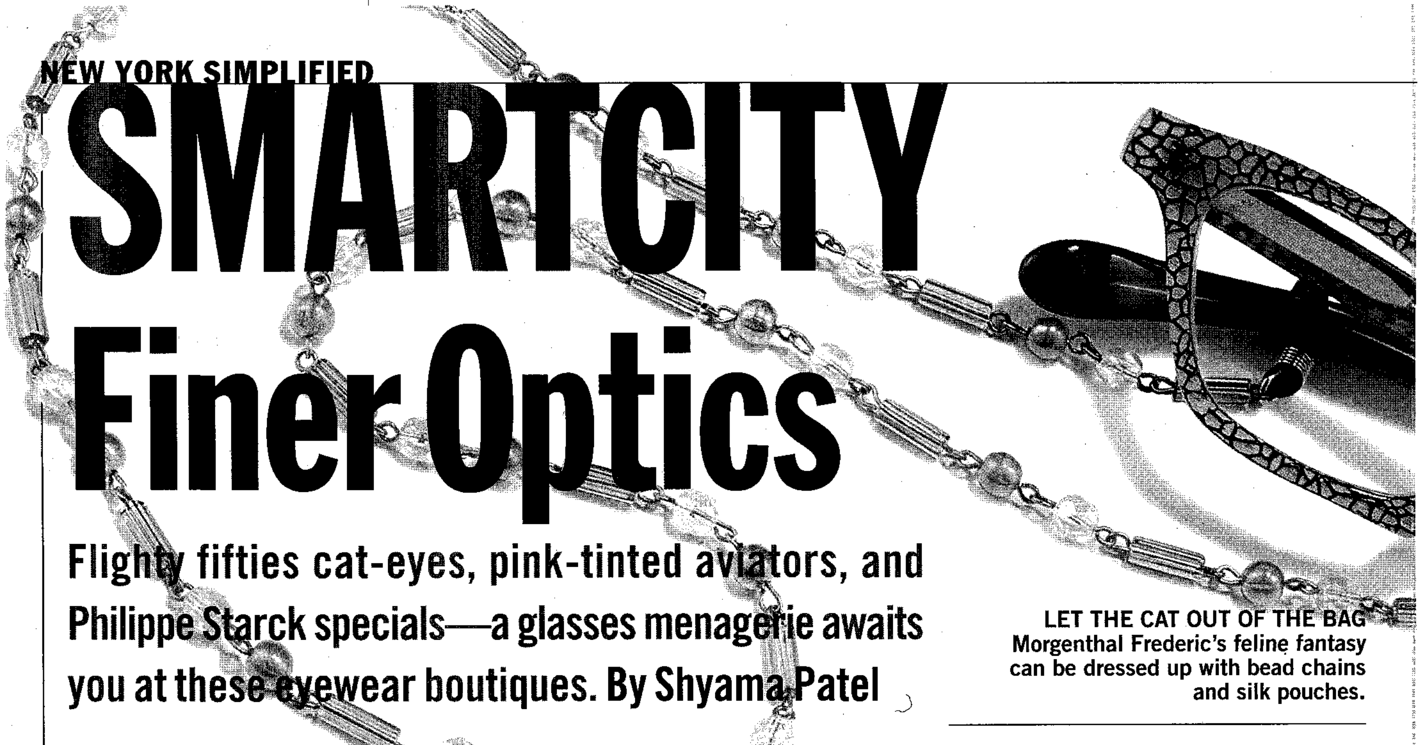
Send shopping questions to Corky Pollan, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999.

Photographs: clockwise from top, Michael Krauss(4); James Worrell(1).

SMARTCITY

Finer Optics

Flighty fifties cat-eyes, pink-tinted aviators, and Philippe Starck specials—a glasses menagerie awaits you at these eyewear boutiques. By Shyama Patel



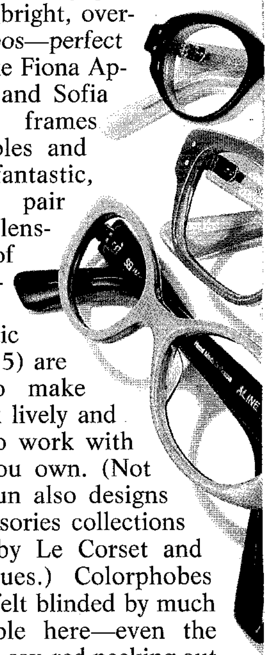
LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG Morgenthal Frederic's feline fantasy can be dressed up with bead chains and silk pouches.

LIKE THE BEST MADISON AVENUE clothing boutiques, designer-owned opticians have always specialized in styles that express the wearer's personality, flattering your face and making an outfit at the same time. This season, the fashion crowd has finally taken notice, and the hunt is on for beautifully made, sharp-looking specs and sunglasses to match the new, polished, rich-looking spring wardrobes. The trendiest choices are wacky fifties cat-eyes, thick plastic rectangles, and *Charlie's Angels*–worthy aviators. But if pink tints don't meet your office dress code, the same boutiques also offer plenty of subtler though equally sophisticated shapes that are almost as fun to wear. Whether you'd frame the windows to your soul in hand-carved buffalo horn or futuristic ultra-light titanium, one of these five shops will have what you're looking for.

HINGE ELEMENTS With his first collection, Robert Marc shows that classic needn't mean old-fashioned.

Morgenthal Frederics
399 West Broadway (212-966-0099); optometrist available Friday to Monday.
Four years after he bought Frederics Opticians in 1986, onetime painter Richard Morgenthal introduced his first style—a bright plastic frame with teeny dark lenses called the Lifesaver. The glasses were youthful and whimsical but versatile enough to liven up anything from a basic black suit to jeans and a T-shirt. Now he and his wife, Leslie, stock their four Manhattan shops with 50 Morgenthal Frederics designs ($175–$390), plus a handful of edgy, lesser-known collections from Asian and European designers like Frances Klein and Jason Kirk. A pair of Dame Edna–esque lacy cat-eye specs ($265) is typical of Morgenthal's sculptural approach, as is the fact that the style was produced by a Japanese machine factory. As for his more fashion-forward endeavors, let's just say Julia Roberts recently scooped up a pair of his seventies-style tinted, rimless aviators. The optional, artsy-craftsy accessories are a must here—we love the hand-sewn, tassel-trimmed silk-shantung pouches that carry two pairs of frames, and beaded chains pretty enough to qualify as jewelry.

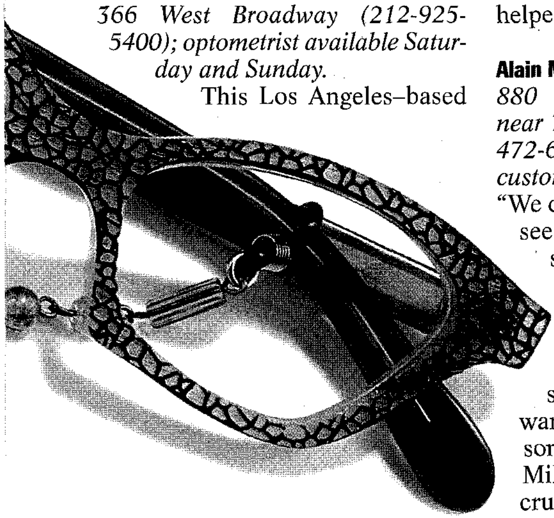
Selima Optique
59 Wooster Street (212-343-9490); optometrist available Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.
Selima Salaun is the queen of ultra-feminine, French-chic eyeglasses and sunglasses in bright, over-the-top color combos—perfect for style-setters like Fiona Apple, Lauryn Hill, and Sofia Coppola. Purple frames with yellow temples and green lenses? A fantastic, jagged-edge red pair with pink-tinted lenses? Like a pair of multicolored, sequined sandals, most of these plastic glasses ($160–$255) are crazy enough to make black clothes look lively and splashy enough to work with everything else you own. (Not surprisingly, Salaun also designs lingerie and accessories collections sold at her nearby Le Corset and Bond 07 boutiques.) Colorphobes would once have felt blinded by much of what's available here—even the black frames have, say, red peeking out underneath—but last year, Salaun added lighter, subtler, sparkly metal



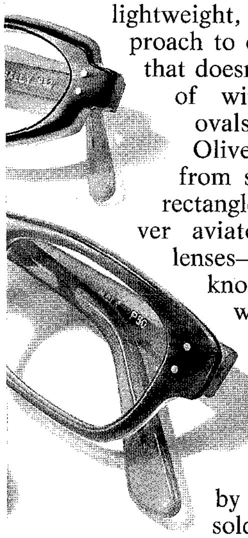
ROBERT MARC
ROBERT MARC

frames to the collection. And there's also plenty of flash-free minimalist stuff to choose from. No, of course it's not made by Selima—she brings it in from makers like Chloé, Dolce & Gabbana, and Martine Sitbon.

Oliver Peoples
366 West Broadway (212-925-5400); optometrist available Saturday and Sunday.
This Los Angeles–based

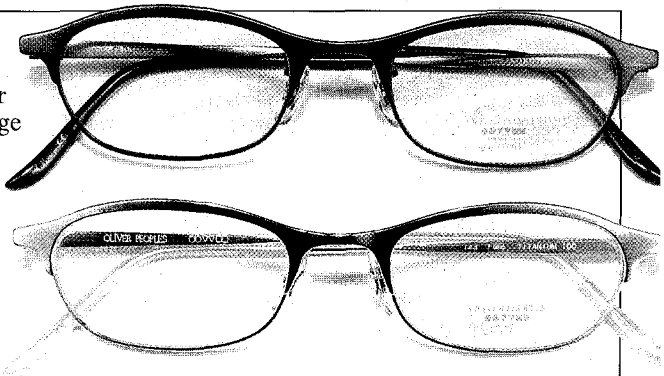


eyewear phenomenon—a longtime favorite of Hollywood heavies like Steven Spielberg, Brad Pitt, Elton John, and Nicole Kidman—takes an airy, lightweight, and modern approach to eyewear design. But that doesn't mean a store full of wiry, generic-looking ovals. Just about every Oliver Peoples frame—from simple, tinted-metal rectangles to trendsetting silver aviators with two-tone lenses—is eye-catching in a knowing, sophisticated way (prices range from $235–$395). The same goes for the Eyevan and Paul Smith eyewear collection, also produced by Oliver Peoples and sold in the shop. For a wilder look, try gradient lenses with names like Tequila Sunrise (shaded from red to gold) or Sour Grape (from purple to green). The company was launched in 1986 with a mother lode of 3,000 vintage twenties and thirties frames from the estate of a collector named Oliver Peoples. And the design team still has a soft spot for retro references—a touch of *Starsky and Hutch* in an oversize, rectangular pair; a bit of the fifties science professor in a heavy metal bridge bar. But the store also sells those gigantic, futuristic Prada frames—in fact, its designers helped create them.



TINTED LOVE Selima Optique frames are wild enough to go with anything.

Alain Mikli
880 Madison Avenue, near 72nd Street (212-472-6085); will refer customers to an outside optometrist.
"We don't want to sell frames you can't see," insists a saleswoman at this shrine to postmodern French eyewear. There's little danger of that. This boutique is a must-see for anyone with a closet full of clothes that make a strong, serious statement who doesn't want his glasses to fade in comparison. There are many who swear by Mikli's exuberant, rhinestone-encrusted styles and his signature plastic wraparound sunglasses (think lab goggles, only in a bright salmon pink.) But we prefer his take on sober, stylish executive chic—heavy on the brow bone and the angles. Such frames are available in tremendous variety here, and it's almost impossible to choose from the wide selection of flattering colors, mostly jewel tones and browns ($195–$475). For the ultimate in comfort, check out a special collection co-designed by Philippe Starck—all frames have fidget-friendly hinges that rotate 360 degrees. Tortoiseshell models are a dignified, urban choice; reflective metal wraparound shades have a sportier, off-to-the-slopes appeal. If you take eyewear craftsmanship really seriously—and are game for spending upwards of $1,000—consider Mikli's top-end Carlino line. The handcrafted frames are all made from real buffalo horn and trimmed in gold.



EYES AND SHINE Oliver Peoples metal frames are downtown in spirit yet sharp enough for the office.

Robert Marc Opticians
575 Madison Avenue, near 57th Street (212-319-2000); will refer customers to an outside optometrist.
For eighteen years, designer Robert Marc has been known for sniffing out the sleek, chic, mostly French eyewear from designers like Lunor and Beausoleil that fills his shops. This spring, he introduces his first signature collection. Inspired by requests from his regular customers, Marc's line is ingeniously simple: seventeen plastic frames (for sunglasses and eyeglasses) that come in about six colors each, with lenses of your choice. The shapes are mostly classics with slight modifications—bold, flattering ovals, rectangles, and slight cat-eyes. All come in a variety of neutral colors or a deep red ($275–$295). In a departure from the oversize, wildly colored seventies stuff that's new again everywhere else, Marc has looked to old-fashioned, handmade eyeglasses for inspiration. The kind of hinge that was once used to join pieces of real tortoiseshell now serves as Marc's "logo"; laminations of slightly different colored plastics give colored frames a subtle, two-tone sheen. But there's no way you'll feel fuddy-duddy in these specs—at least not judging from the way they look on Uma Thurman, Natasha Richardson, and Liam Neeson. ▬

alain mikli
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alain mikli

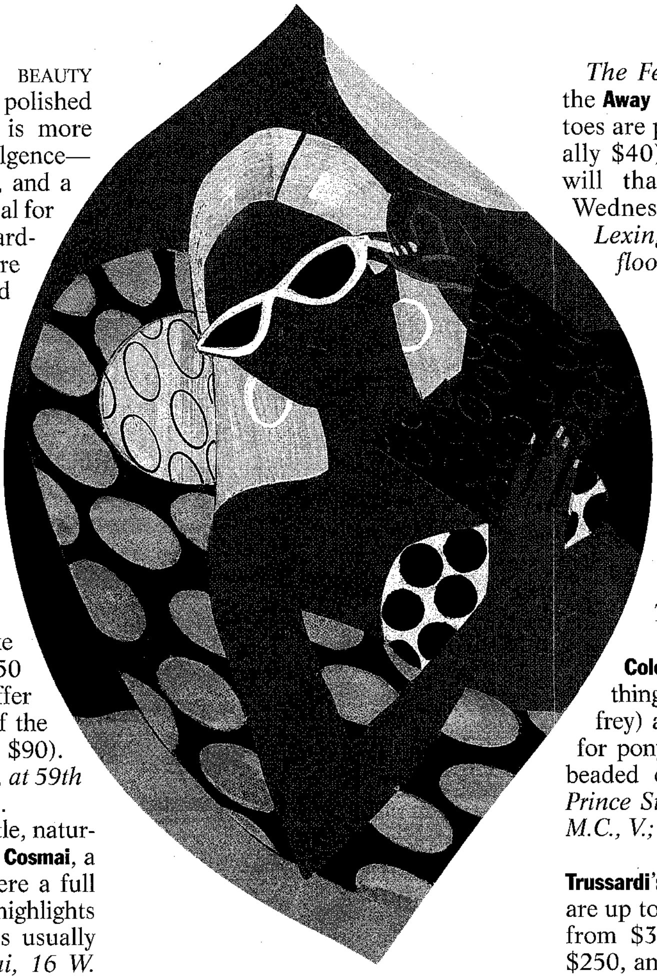
BROW BEATERS In Alain Mikli's sophisticated, French-made spectacles, you're always in charge.

Photographed by Michael Kraus.

SALES & BARGAINS **SHYAMA PATEL**

Bare Essentials

Polish your act: *That sleek, pampered look doesn't have to break your budget. This summer, get trimmed, buffed, and tinted in a top salon* **at barber-shop prices.**



CRAVING A PRE-SUMMER BEAUTY break? This spring, polished Palm Beach grooming is more than a sneaky indulgence—smooth skin, neat nails, and a lush mane are practically essential for your new, pulled-together wardrobe. Top-drawer treatments are a cinch for those with third homes in Florida, but for the rest of us they could spell financial disaster. So "Sales & Bargains" has made a few pampering deals. Just mention the magazine when booking times between now and June 8, bring this page (yes, you can keep it), and tip as you would on the full price (and please, only one visit to each place with this offer).

The Cut: At **Oscar Blandi**'s luxe Plaza digs, you'll pay a mere $50 for a cut any day during this offer and on Mondays for the rest of the summer (prices usually start at $90). *The Plaza Hotel, 768 Fifth Ave., at 59th St., mezzanine (212-593-7930).*

The Color: For a head of subtle, natural-looking highlights, try **Angela Cosmai**, a cozy, antiques-filled space where a full head of subtle, natural-looking highlights will cost you only $80 (prices usually start at $250). *Angela Cosmai, 16 W. 55th St., second floor (212-541-5820).*

The Bounce: For shiny, smooth, healthy locks, try a shampoo with a half-hour deep-conditioning treatment of your choice for $25 (usually $55) at **Frederic Fekkai Beauté de Provence**. Monday to Wednesday only. *Frederic Fekkai, 15 E. 57th St., floor T-1 (212-753-9500).*

Sleek, Smooth Skin: For a fuzz-free body and face, make your way to the glam **HR Beauty Gallery** and get half off waxing anywhere you want (prices usually range from $15 for a lip wax to $35 for a bikini wax to $70 for a full-leg wax). Tuesday to Thursday only. *HR Beauty Gallery, 135 Spring St. (212-343-9963).*

The Tan: Pretty floral skirts demand tanned legs. For color without health risk, try **The Spa at Equinox**'s 70-minute sea-salt scrub and self-tanner application for $50 (usually $105). Weekdays only. *Equinox, 205 E. 85th St. (212-396-9611); 140 E. 63rd St. (212-750-4671); 1633 Broadway, near 50th St. (212-541-7000).*

The Brows: Designer Melanie Daniels at the **John Barrett Salon** in Bergdorf Goodman is a favorite for perfect, natural-looking brows. For you, the first try is $20 (usually $50). No appointment necessary; Tuesday to Saturday only. *Bergdorf Goodman, ninth floor (212-872-2700).*

The Feet: Sink into a cozy chair at the **Away Spa and Gym**, and relax as your toes are perfected for a mere $20 (usually $40)—those new python sandals will thank you for it. Sunday to Wednesday only. *The W Hotel, 541 Lexington Ave., at 49th St., fourth floor (212-407-2970).*

Picks of the Week

Max Mara and Marina Rinaldi are clearing loads of women's styles for spring (pictured), plus fall leftovers at less than half-price, from $69 for skirts to $339 for suits. Sizes 2–20. *Parsons School of Design, 560 Seventh Ave., at 40th St.; A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Wed. 9–6:30, Thurs. till 5; 5/8–5/11.*

Colette Malouf's pretty, girly hair things and jewelry (at stores like Jeffrey) are half off at her sale: from $5 for ponytail holders to $150 for glass-beaded chokers. *594 Broadway, near Prince St., Suite 1216 (212-941-9588); M.C., V.; Thurs.– Fri. 4–7; 5/11–5/12.*

Trussardi's sharp Italian clothes and bags are up to 70 percent off. Men's belts are from $35, women's leather jeans are $250, and python bags are $400. *20 W. 57th St., sixth floor (212-246-9860); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.–Fri. 9–6, Thurs. till 7; 5/10–5/12.*

Rena Lange Red and Blue, **John Richmond**, and **Geen Morgan**'s sexy, casual women's samples are 60 percent off, from $40 to $300. Sizes 6–8. *Moschillo, 730 Fifth Ave., near 57th St., Suite 604 (212-246-6724); M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 10–5; 5/8–5/26.*

UNI*FORM by Gemma Kahng's colorful spring basics for women are 60 to 80 percent off at the sale, from $35 for knit tops to $200 for a coat. *224 Centre St., sixth floor (212-274-8773); cash only; Wed.–Thurs. 10–7, Fri. till 6; 5/10–5/12.* ■

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Illustration by Bill Donovan. Photograph courtesy of firstView.com.

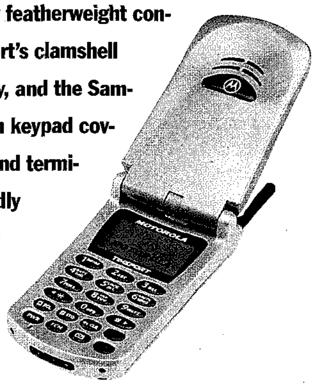
Air Force

Keep connected—but not tied down—with the latest crop of wireless wonders.

Still reeling from Time Warner Cable's ABC lockout? Create your own damn TV station with the Sony DCR-TRV820 Handycam ($1,299, J&R Computer World in late May), which lets you beam high-resolution video and stereo sound right into your television. Just aim your Handycam in the general direction of the Sony IFT-R20 Super Laserlink Wireless Receiver ($49), a small black box that goes on top of your TV set, and (provided you're within 26 feet of the TV) "broadcast" directly from the camcorder—no cables, no adapters, no nothing. The Handycam's other gee-whiz feature is a built-in mini-printer that spits out color video stills on business-card-size paper or small stickers.

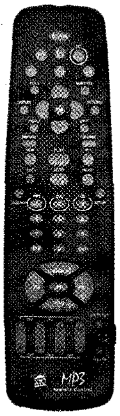
Sexy Two-Pieces

The two sweetest cell phones for spring? The diminutive Motorola Timeport P8167 ($299) and Samsung 6100 ($179), which both operate on Sprint's PCS digital network and include "microbrowser" Web-surfing capabilities (check your stocks, read the latest headlines). They're also worthy featherweight contenders designwise—the Timeport's clamshell shape has a satisfying solidity, and the Samsung features a flip-down keypad cover, so you can take and terminate calls by one-handedly snapping it open and shut. It's an oddly satisfying gesture, and it makes borrowing a friend's one-piece Nokia anticlimactic: You end a call and your phone just . . . sits there. It's sad, really.



Control Freak

It's almost creepy how much control the X10 MP3 Anywhere 2000 remote gives you. Yeah, it puts you in command of your stereo, TV, DVD player, etc.—not to mention X10 modules you can use to operate lights and appliances (say, a space heater or a fan). But the X10 can *also* control a PC's MP3 audio files with a 2.4GHz mini–broadcast system—part goes into your PC's sound card and part into your home stereo. The neatest trick of all is that X10 has kept remarkable control of the price: The entire system is $49.99 (available direct at www.x10.com or 800-675-3044).



etc.

HEAD CASES Do your long-suffering neighbors bang on your apartment walls if you turn your stereo's volume above 3? Invest in a pair of wireless, rechargeable headphones. The Sennheiser RS6 ($149.99, J&R; 212-238-9000) uses 900MHz RF technology and has a 250-foot range; the high-end Sony MDR-DS5000 ($499.99, J&R) has just a 33-foot range but more than makes up for it by wirelessly broadcasting Virtual Dolby Digital surround sound—the only one on the market that does. . . . **UNLEASH YOUR MOUSE** Microsoft's Cordless Wheel Mouse ($39.99, CompUSA; 212-764-6224) uses digital radio technology to wirelessly control your Windows PC (it works up to five feet from the receiver)—perfect for the ultra-minimalist desktop.

BY SIMON DUMENCO

MOVIES PETER RAINER

Blade Runner

'Gladiator' pays tribute to Hollywood's great Roman action orgies; if the film doesn't rise above the epic genre, Russell Crowe's performance does.

To the hilt: Crowe goes for broke in Ridley Scott's *Gladiator.*

SET IN THAT MOST HOLLYWOOD OF ERAS, A.D. 180, **Gladiator** is an attempt to make a lavish Roman epic on the scale of *Spartacus* or *Ben-Hur* while at the same time providing us with a hero, Russell Crowe's Maximus, who is all simmer and scowl. It's a spectacularly over-the-top production starring a monumentally indrawn protagonist. General Maximus, who begins the movie massacring Yeti-looking barbarians in the forests, doesn't suffer fools gladly. He doesn't suffer *anything* gladly, not even suffering. He's the archetypal strong, silent type, and when he speaks, his words are as blunt as his knife blade is sharp. But Crowe, unlike, say, Clint Eastwood, knows how to make all that strong-silent masculinity expressive; as he also demonstrated in *The Insider,* he can play a character in a state of near stasis and still create a force field of rage and longing and hurt. Whenever Maximus the brooder moves into action, it's as if everything coiled inside him automatically springs to life. Readiness, for him, is a state of being.

Ridley Scott, directing from a script by David Franzoni, John Logan, and William Nicholson, is a filmmaker who likes to create worlds, and the world he has created here is a coming-together of Kubrick and Sergio Leone and the World Wrestling Federation, all of it heightened by Scott's inimitably stentorian style. Scott is the moviemaking equivalent of a writer who types everything uppercase. He's a hard-sell visionary, and maybe that's why parts of *Gladiator,* particularly the fighting parts, resemble nothing so much as his specialty, the ultimate Super Bowl halftime commercial.

But what is Scott selling, exactly? It's a bit much to claim, as some have, that *Gladiator* is a breakthrough example of Roman-epic revisionism. What, after all, has been revised? Many of the film's plotlines and tropes are readily familiar, not only from *Spartacus* and *Ben-Hur* but also from *The Fall of the Roman Empire* and *Barabbas* and *Cleopatra* and the whole sweaty *Hercules* ilk. Marcus Aurelius (an impressively restrained Richard Harris) is that most standard of all Caesars: the ailing philosopher-king who laments his warring years. Maximus is the loyal soldier who, having done his duty for Rome, wants only to return to his wife and young son and live a quiet country life among the poplars. But Maximus is also the son Caesar wishes he had (another well-worn Roman-movie trope). Alas, the regal coot is saddled with Joaquin Phoenix's Commodus—think commode—who smothers the old man when he discovers that Maximus, whom he subsequently dispatches for execution, has been tapped to restore the Republic.

Then there's Commodus's sister, Lucilla (Connie Nielsen), another mainstay of the toga party; her father actually says to her, "If only you would have been born a man, what a Caesar you would have made." When Maximus is made a slave, and then a gladiator, we're presented with yet more Roman-epic stalwarts, including the gladiator ringmaster Proximo, played with ripe relish by Oliver Reed in his last screen appearance, and Juba (Djimon Hounsou), the noble black man and fellow fighter whose sinews are strung tight with a yearning for freedom. He's Woody Strode redux.

Actually, I'm glad *Gladiator* is not, to my way of thinking, terribly revisionist. It's been years, after all, since the last Roman epic, and the genre has always been a personal guilty pleasure: all those chariots and amphitheaters and centurions and sandals and mincing cutthroats. In terms of sheer flamboyant nastiness, Roman epics give you more bang for your buck than just about any other kind of movie. The biggest problem with *Gladiator* is not that it's timeworn but rather that it's not old-fashioned *enough.* The genre's kitsch pleasures are overridden by Scott's periodic attempts at grandiosity. The Forum looks like something out of *Triumph of the Will,* and the battle sequences, especially the opener, suffer from tour-de-force-itis. The sheer percussiveness of it all, along with too many close-ups of flailing limbs and bits of bodies, are enough to make one break out in

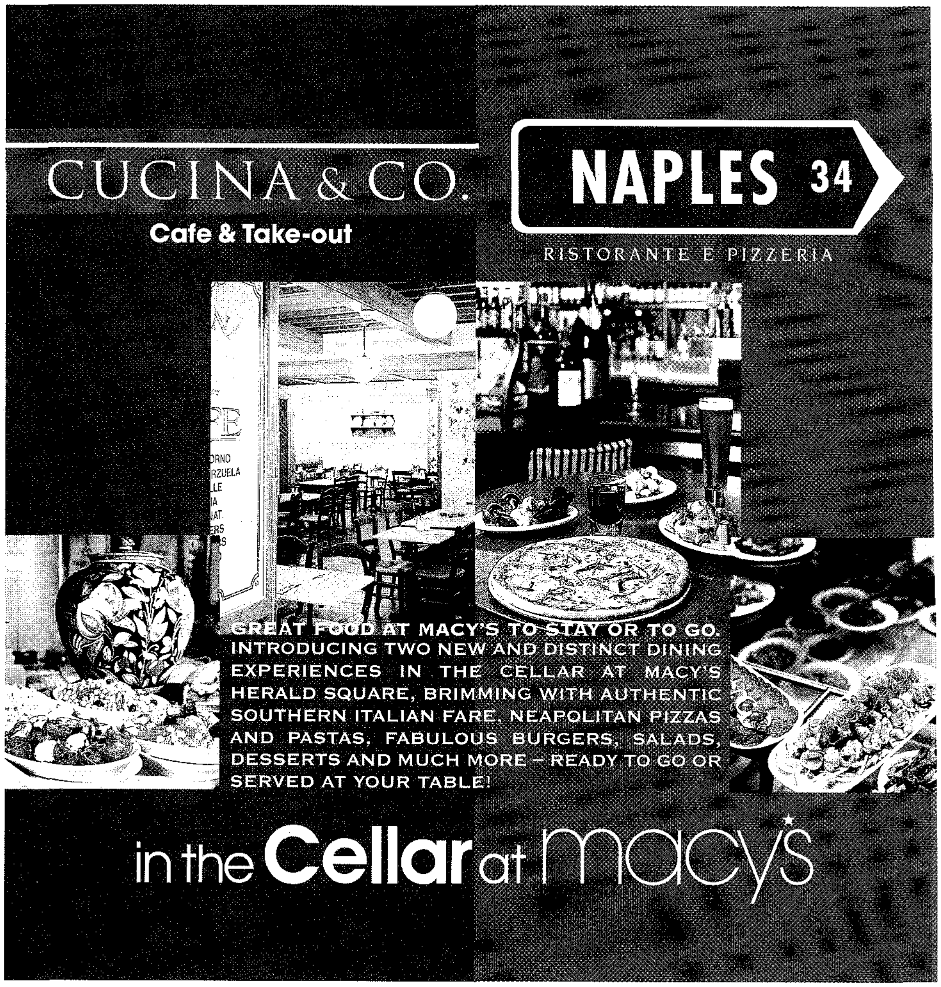
Photograph by Jaap Buitendijk.

hives. Scott does occasionally pull off a whopper, like the first, sweeping, can't-believe-our-eyes glimpse of the Colosseum (partially re-created with computer-generated imagery), but I'd gladly sacrifice most of these moments for more like the one in which the incestuous, thin-lipped Commodus, in full eyeliner appliqué, mutters to himself, "I'm terribly vexed."

Halfway into the movie, Proximo tells his prize gladiator, Maximus, "Win the crowd and you win your freedom." Winning the crowd at all costs is also the mantra of Hollywood, and Ridley Scott places his film squarely in that tradition. He treats his audience alternately like epicures and like a vulgar, bloodthirsty mob not dissimilar to the one that crowded the Colosseum. Whatever it takes to bring down the house. Without Russell Crowe's dynamism holding it all together, *Gladiator* might have devolved into a rash of overblown pandering. Crowe plays a character with a genius for survival, and he saves the movie, too.

In brief: IN **I Dreamed of Africa**, KIM BASINGER plays the real-life Kuki Gallmann, who, in 1972, left her life of patrician privilege in Venice to settle with her husband (Vincent Perez) and young son in rural Kenya. In the beginning, the hardships are routine, but by the time a lion mauls the family dog, we're pretty sure things will only get worse. And do they ever. "Why does love cost us so much?" Kuki asks in one of her periodic inspirational voice-overs. We're supposed to see her sacrifice as the price one pays for finding meaning in life, but it's difficult to suppress the notion that she and her family would be a lot better off far away from all the poachers and puff adders. The film, lackadaisically directed by Hugh Hudson, never really makes it humanly clear what keeps Kuki going, but the African vistas are breathtaking—you were expecting otherwise?— and so is Kim Basinger, whose lily-of-the-valley loveliness is incandescent amid all the sun-baked earth tones. She gives Kuki's indomitability a poetic force; Africa for this woman is one long ravishment. . . . Adapted from a Somerset Maugham novella of romance and murder set in 1938 Tuscany and directed by Philip (*Angels & Insects*) Haas, the lackluster **Up at the Villa** features actors who appear to be either exactly right for their roles—like James Fox, as the soon-to-be-appointed governor of Bengal—or exactly wrong, like Sean Penn, as an American playboy-dandy, and Jeremy Davies, as an Austrian refugee. Kristin Scott Thomas, who might seem well cast as an English beauty in murderous straits, turns out to be all wrong, too: Her poise, which once seemed so sensual, has now reached the freezing point. ■

Peter Rainer's 1998–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.



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BOOKS DANIEL MENDELSOHN

Hideous Kinky

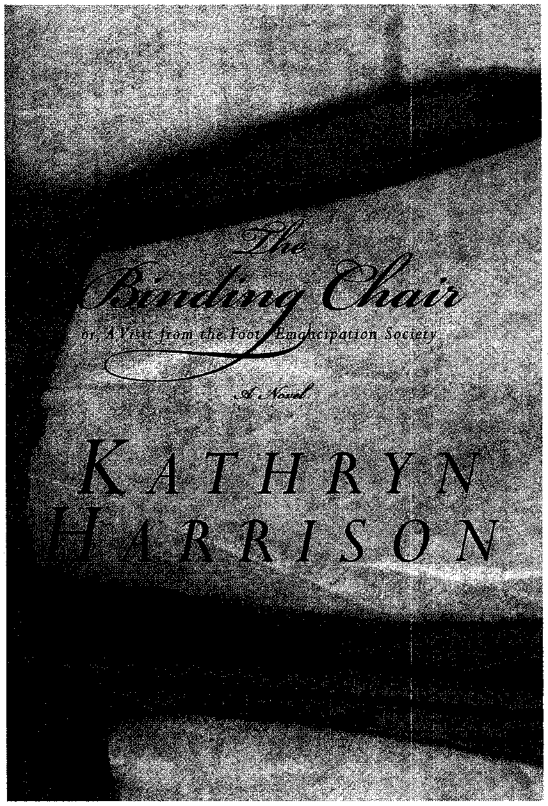
Having exorcised the demons of her creepy incestuous affair in a best-selling memoir, Kathryn Harrison returns to fiction to explore a creepy sexual fetish, foot-binding.

The Binding Chair

BY KATHRYN HARRISON

Random House; 322 pages; $24.95

NOTHING THAT THE NOVELIST AND MEMOIRIST Kathryn Harrison has written so far prepares you for her sprawling new historical novel. After all, her 1991 debut, *Thicker Than Water,* was a contemporary American tale—the story of a sensitive and troubled young woman who triumphantly survives the wounds inflicted by her elegant, emotionally distant mother and her creepy, sexually exploitative father. Then came *Exposure* (1993), which—although it, too, was a contemporary American tale—boldly turned to the subject of a sensitive and troubled young woman who triumphantly finds emotional closure despite an absent mother and a creepy, sexually exploitative father. In a startling departure, *Poison* (1995), set in seventeenth-century Spain, told the story of not one but two troubled, sensitive young women who, haunted by memories of their beautiful and/or distant mothers, manage to achieve self-knowledge despite being sexually exploited and/or emotionally thwarted by creepy men. Finally, in 1997, Harrison produced her most strikingly original work: *The Kiss,* a searing account of the author's own experiences as a sensitive and troubled young woman who triumphantly seeks emotional closure despite her victimization at the hands of dysfunctional parents: in this particular case, I believe, an elegant but emotionally aloof mother and a creepy, sexually exploitative father.



What, you wondered, could be next?

I don't want to give too much away about *The Binding Chair,* a melodrama set in turn-of-the-century Shanghai and on "the enviably sparkling coast of southern France," but I don't think there's any harm in revealing that the novel's title hints at some daring new themes. It refers to the once-traditional Chinese custom of foot-binding: mutilating and miniaturizing the feet of well-born young girls for reasons that were thought to be not only aesthetic but, as you learn here, erotic as well. (The ol' bound-foot-in-the-rectum-during-fellatio trick, daintily described by the author, may not seem quite so erotic when performed with normal-size feet.) This, in other words, is a book about an entire culture of delicate, sensitive young women who are exploited by creepy men.

In *The Binding Chair,* as in her earlier historical novel, the author intertwines the stories of two very different women—one a naïve victim, the other a sexual sophisticate who's ultimately punished for her assertiveness—in order to underscore her single familiar theme. *Poison* contrasts a feisty, sexually fulfilled Aragonese peasant girl with the French-born queen of Spain, Maria Luisa, a sexually repressed bird forced to live in a rococo cage. *The Binding Chair*'s protagonist is May (née Chao-tsing) Cohen, an icily beautiful Chinese woman whose "nervous, delicate nostrils" and crippled feet belie, inevitably, a feisty toughness. May flees the stultifying servility of her conventional first marriage and becomes a prostitute; she ends up marrying her most devoted client, a wealthy Jewish man named Arthur Cohen whose family has settled in Shanghai. The other heroine is Alice Benjamin, May's "dark, fierce" niece by marriage, whose "too full, too hungry" lips alert you to the fact that she has no intention of letting drab convention come between her and her orgasms. The novel cross-cuts between flashbacks to May's miserable stint as the fourth wife of a wealthy merchant, her daring flight, the tragic death of her and Arthur's daughter, and Alice's adolescent rebellion against her conventional family. Alice ends up as May's ward on the Riviera, trying to get her aunt into a pair of orthopedic shoes and having liberating sex with a dashing White Russian doctor in passages that, it must be said, are unlikely to make this book one to read with one hand. ("His longest toe was the first one, the big toe; hers was the second.")

If there's something vaguely *Princess Daisy*–ish about *The Binding Chair's* plot, it's because beneath the meticulously researched references to the décor of the compartments on the Great Siberian Express, or to Fang Hsun's *Classifications of the Qualities of Fragrant Lotuses* (an ancient manual on foot-binding), there beats the heaving heart of a Judith Krantz novel—one of those "sweeping," rags-to-riches, triumph-and-tragedy stories that are written in order to confirm the fantasies (you, too, can start out as nothing and end up living on the Riviera—and to *hell* with men) or anxieties (you're basically just your husband's emotionally crippled sex slave) of their readership. *The Binding Chair,* complete with fascinating cultural exotica and attractive—and, of course, feisty—heroines, is, in fact, a good, juicy read.

So is Krantz. But Harrison aspires to be much more than a "women's novelist," and her writing does sometimes rise above romance-channel clichés to attain literary vigor. Admirers of the author's earlier work have praised her lyrical, poetic style, which I take it refers to sentences like "What strange alchemy is this, the radiation treatment?" But Harrison can, in fact, produce genuine insights when she's not so intent on being arty and poetic. When May first comes to Shanghai, she stays in a hotel where, for the first time, she encounters European women, taking long, emancipated strides with their big, unbound feet: "May listened to their heels strike the floor with the force of horses' hooves." Only a real novelist would reveal May's moment of culture-shock aurally rather than visually. And there are nuggets of perception about the strange ways in which men and women relate: "Each time Arthur entered May," Harrison writes, "it seemed to him that he was about to understand something." That's nice.

Unfortunately, there are too few moments like this in *The Binding Chair,* whose serious aspirations are undercut by its author's willingness to sacrifice nuances of motivation and psychology to slogans about victimized women. "Was not suffering the lot of females?" May muses at the opening of the novel. "How could it be that marriage . . . was to be nothing more than wretched servitude?" Even the period trimmings, you come to realize, are just an afterthought—a by-product of the author's search for a really vile, patriarchal mise-en-scène. *The Binding Chair* tends to wear its late-Imperial costume either too sloppily or too ostentatiously: It wobbles between banal cliché ("dirty, seething Shanghai") and effortful touches that, instead of seamlessly inserting you into a strange culture, call attention to the many hours the author has spent in the library. ("Had the poison imparted to his skin an unnaturally white smoothness recalling the cheap celluloid collars worn by gendarmes on their evenings off?")

Worse, Harrison's reductive point comes at the price of coherent characterization and narrative credibility. In order to keep her plot going, she creates a rather artificial conflict between Alice and May (who, you'd think, were two peas in a pod); and at the novel's climax, she has the tough old May make a sacrifice for her niece that is wholly at odds with everything we know about this shrewd lady—a canny and tenacious survivor if ever there was one. But then, the author is so determined to have her female characters end up as victims that with the exception of full-lipped Alice, every significant female character suffers horribly or dies—by fire, Spanish flu, murder, or suicide—as does the one, admittedly nebbishy man who likes and understands women. (Harrison's men tend to be either wholly villainous or completely ineffectual: She's never tried to create an interesting, strong, sympathetic male.) When Arthur Cohen first visits May in her brothel, he comes as the well-intentioned representative of a humanitarian organization called the Foot Emancipation Society, yet almost immediately he becomes sexually obsessed with her "violated, broken, sometimes pungent feet." Men, Harrison seems to be saying, secretly prize women's pain; whatever men may say about wanting to emancipate women, they prefer them crippled.

ALTHOUGH IT BROUGHT HER A GOOD DEAL OF attention, the publication of *The Kiss* may well have been a bad career move for someone aspiring to be taken seriously as a novelist. From the start, there was something flat and unresolved about Harrison's fiction—she was content to show pathetic females without coming to any conclusions about female suffering that you couldn't get from *US* magazine ("Anorexia may begin as an attempt to make myself fit my mother's ideal . . ." etc.). *The Kiss* suggested that Harrison was using her fiction as a kind of corrective replaying of her past emotional trauma, a way of compulsively reasserting how horrible her parents were—and how attractively vulnerable she is. (Her author photos have the wounded-but-stunningly-beautiful quality you associate with the better fragrance ads.)

Good fiction can certainly come from the darker regions of an author's psyche, but a real novel is much more than a Xerox of the author. Harrison's failure thus far to see in the world anything but her "issues"—however legitimate they may be—continues to cripple her work. There are signs that Harrison is capable of a genuine novelistic leap; but so far, like May Cohen, she has taken only very tiny steps. ■

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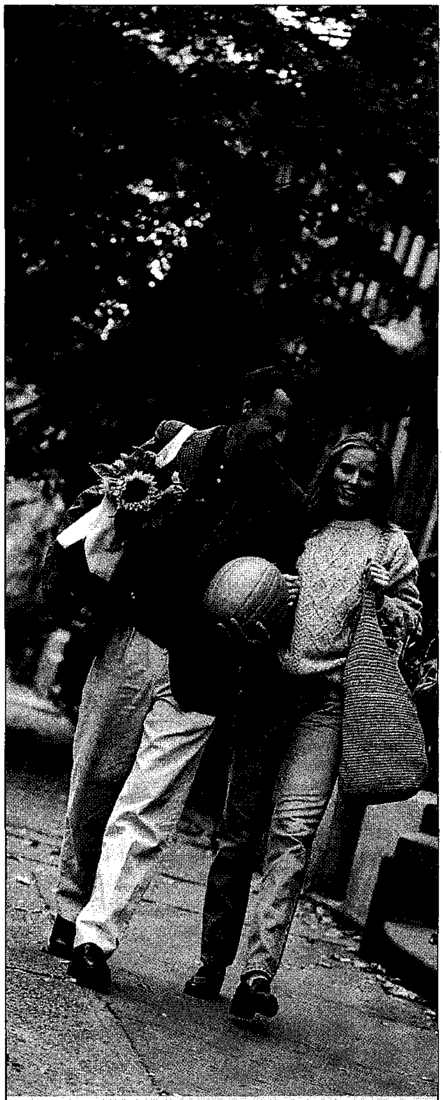

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THEATER JOHN SIMON

The Music Woman

Susan Stroman's lively revival of 'The Music Man' may not displace the memory of Robert Preston, but it should finally make a star of Rebecca Luker.

BACK IN 1957, MEREDITH WILLSON'S **The Music Man** made a star out of Robert Preston; the current revival should do the same for Rebecca Luker. As she has steadily demonstrated, she is blessed with the voice, the looks, and the acting talent of a musical-comedy diva, and only typecasting, lack of opportunity, and some sort of universal blindness and deafness have kept her from the deserved pedestal. As Marian Paroo, the librarian of River City, Iowa, who goes from tight-lipped spinster to glowing inamorata in this happy show, Miss Luker gives a performance as detailed, nuanced, and cherishable as ever turned a performer into a legend.

Susan Stroman's production has other assets as well, but let's take care first of its chief liability. The role of Professor Harold Hill, the sales- and con man who sells the dismal little Iowa town brass instruments and uniforms and promises to turn its youth into a marching band under his leadership—though he can't tell one note from another—was created immortally by Robert Preston. He had an infectious way of making a charlatan believable, a Lothario's wooing credible, a swindler's eventual revelation of a heart behind his billfold totally convincing.

Craig Bierko, an obscure movie actor, the incumbent Hill, gives an impersonation rather than a performance. He sounds, deliberately or not, uncannily like Preston, and has mastered a good many histrionic Prestonisms. This may not bother those who never experienced Preston—although the movie version with him is easily available—but is to the rest of us like a hostess's proudly displaying her flagrant copy of a Vermeer. Add—or subtract—that Bierko has a faintly batrachian aspect, underlined by his profuse sweating, and you wonder why the townspeople, to say nothing of the starchy librarian, would so willingly take him to their flinty bosoms.

Miss Stroman has amply proved her talent as a choreographer, and most of her dances here are on target, even if her bravura library frolic to "Marian the Librarian" is less able to balance chaos with focus than Onna White's for the premiere production and the movie. She is also as yet less apt as a director of nonmusical passages, and does not quite establish the basic gruffness of River City's denizens, the various subplots and their interrelation, or the stages by which sundry transformations take place. But she does keep things moving, often inventively.

As the pompous mayor and his pretentious wife, Paul Benedict and Ruth Williamson (especially she) may lean a little too steeply into caricature; as Marian's troubled little brother, Michael Phelan may have less charisma than previous kids in the role. But these are minor problems, and the members of the Harold Hill–induced barbershop quartet, like the remainder of the spirited supporting cast, do handsomely enough. Willson's score is consistently endearing and, for its time, innovative. Thus, the opening train number—which Miss Stroman prefaces with the overture featuring the pit orchestra as a traveling band—comes off as the granddaddy of all rap music. So, too, the melodic identity of Hill's rousing "76 Trombones" and Marian's wistful "Goodnight, My Someone" presages their singers' eventual compatibility. And much more to keep an audience elated.

Less felicitous are Thomas Lynch's serviceable but underimagined sets and William Ivey Long's funny but overfancy costumes. Still, salient about this revival is how far it outshines today's crop of musicals and how uncloyingly it dispenses well-earned cheer. The Stroman-invented postlude, wherein the kids and adults join in an apotheosis of marching-band music–cum–good citizenship, may run somewhat counter to logic, but as a *coup de théâtre* it fully earns its keep.

Dancing as fast as they can: Tracy Nicole Chapman, Max Casella, Craig Bierko, and Rebecca Luker in *The Music Man.*

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

NO AUTHORIAL COMMENT HAS BEEN more widely noted than the request of Chekhov that his plays be performed as comedies. Yet what may have been a much-needed corrective to the Moscow Art Theater's propensity for long-faced earnestness is no justification of Michael Mayer's allowing so much of his production of **Uncle Vanya** to turn into outlandish farce. This great play, like Chekhov's other masterpieces, is the most tragic of comedies, the tragicomedy of frustration.

Professor Serebryakov is an elderly successful vulgarizer of art history; formerly married to the deceased mistress of the Voynitzky estate, he is husband to the young, beautiful, and bored Yelena. His grown daughter, Sonya, and ex-brother-in-law, her uncle Vanya, slavishly run the estate for him. Vanya, sensitive and intelligent, is hopelessly smitten with Yelena and envious of the fascination the pompous professor undeservedly exudes. The country doctor, Astrov, is an idealistic ecologist, chafed by his stifling milieu but not unaware of his own quixoticism.

Yelena, finally undeceived by her spouse's otiosity but too proper to cheat, is frozen into marmoreal boredom. Irritated by Vanya and unwilling to yield to her fascination with Astrov, she plays intermediary for the plain Sonya, who vainly yearns for the doctor. The cast is rounded out by Maria Vasilyevna, Vanya's widowed mother, another woman taken in by Serebryakov; Telegin, a ruined landowner and permanent parasitic houseguest; and Marina, the faithful old nanny.

Out of this ill-assorted mix residing, summering, or merely lingering on the estate, Chekhov creates a combustible mixture of longing, languishing, seething, and posturing whose comic outbursts merely punctuate the underlying melancholy.

If you have seen the meteoric Astrov of Laurence Olivier and the heartbreaking Vanya of Ralph Richardson—but even if you haven't—you'll have little patience for the affected, self-dramatizing Astrov of Roger Rees, who turns the play's most positive character into a twitchy near-psychotic; you will also be disappointed by the able Derek Jacobi's too histrionic, capering Vanya. The good Brian Murray makes Serebryakov monochromatically laughable; Amy Ryan piles poor acting on top of aggressive unappealingness as Sonya. David Patrick Kelly's Telegin is an obnoxious pipsqueak, and Rita Gam's Maria Vasilyevna (in a part that seems to have been shortened) registers nothing. At least Anne Pitoniak proves dependable as the old nurse.

Mike Poulton's translation is up-to-date; the gifted Tony Walton has devised rather bizarre scenery and hit-or-miss costumes; the excellent David Van Tieghem for once contributes misplaced music—but first-rate bird sounds; and Kenneth Posner's lightning is again irreproachable. Michael Mayer must shoulder the bulk of the blame for turning *Uncle Vanya* into a tantrum in a samovar, and changing vodka into sarsaparilla.

THE TWENTYSOMETHING REBECCA PRICHARD earned the London Critics Circle Award with her third play, **Yard Gal**. Members of Jamaican or West Indian posses (gangs) are known as yardies, *yard* meaning either a home or their native land. The girls are known as yard gals. So much for the title; now for the less interesting part, the play.

This is a semi-stylized, semi-realist, semi-serious piece about two yard gals, the Nigerian Bukola, nicknamed Boo, and Marie, a native of working-class Hackney, the East End locale. To make the play less hackneyed, the teenagers also impersonate a number of other characters, including a yardie pimp with whom both are involved, and sundry members of their own or another, hostile posse. The girls are strongly drawn to each other, but there is no lesbianism, only abandoned dancing at local joints, drug use and traffic, sundry rivalries, fights, the odd wounding with broken bottles, a two-year jail stint, illegitimate childbirth, and other such mundane matters.

If anything (debatably) distinguishes the play, it is Prichard's mastery of the local lingo. Though bearing a distinct resemblance to English, it teems with impenetrable terms and enigmatic syntax—e.g., Marie's "I wanna look kriss man. All rude bways gwan big me up tonight star," to which Boo replies, "Ya too man crazy girl, innit." The glossary provided by the program elucidates only a portion of the argot's mysteries, and admiration for a young middle-class author's mastery of the dialect's arcana must have misled British critics into thinking the chase had a beast in view. But not all labyrinths house a minotaur, let alone a masterpiece.

The London cast, director, and chief designer are repeating over here. As Boo, Sharon Duncan-Brewster is genuinely appealing; as Marie, Amelia Lowdell is a mite less so. The minimalist production, mostly light-up cubes harboring diverse props, is adequately directed by Gemma Bodinetz in a text Prichard has slightly revised. But yard goods of yard talk do not sufficiently clothe an essentially bare-bones exercise.

OLYMPIA DUKAKIS IS A FINE ACTRESS EVEN when she merely monologizes on a Florida park bench. In Martin Sherman's **Rose**, she is the eponymous octogenarian seemingly riveted to that bench as she recalls her jam-packed life (Ukrainian shtetl, Warsaw ghetto, marriage to a one-eyed painter, grizzly journey on the *Exodus*, rescue by an amorous American amateur sailor), only squirming a little now and then. I myself squirmed more, and left early. ■

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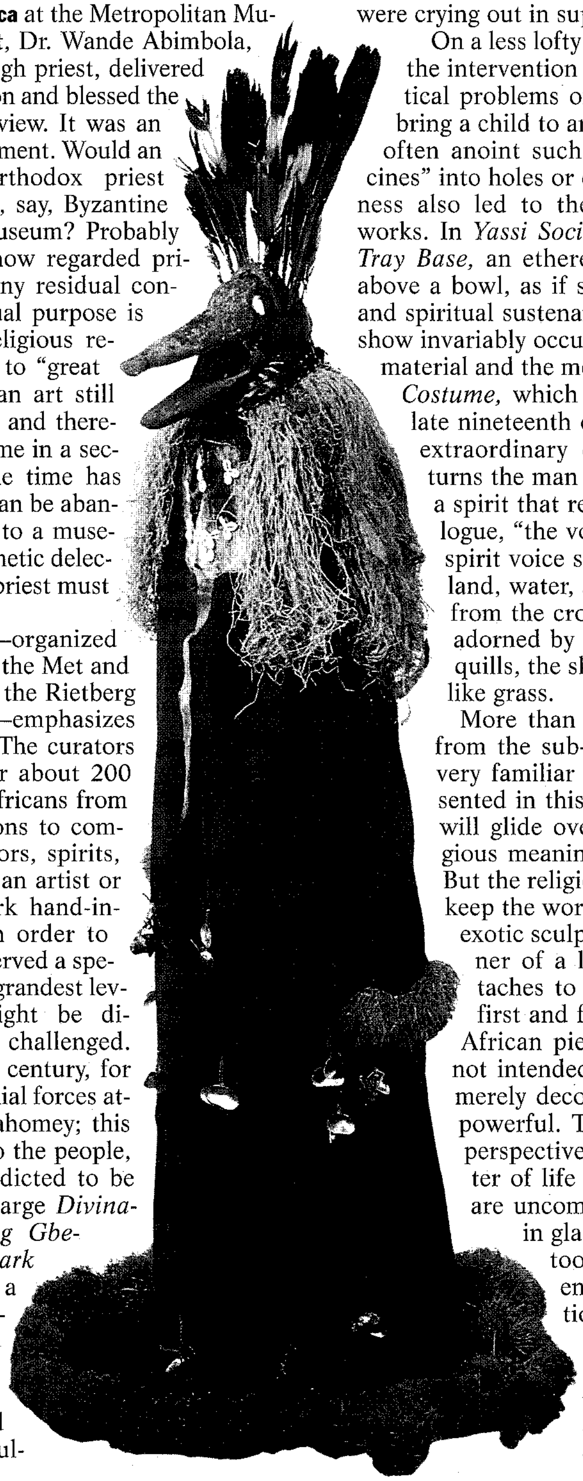
ART **MARK STEVENS**

Metaphysical Culture

Unlike most spiritually inspired Western art, the sub-Saharan African works on display in the Met's "Art and Oracle" haven't lost their religion.

BEFORE THE OPENING OF **Art and Oracle: Spirit Voices of Africa** at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dr. Wande Abimbola, a Yoruba high priest, delivered an invocation and blessed the objects on view. It was an unusual moment. Would an Eastern Orthodox priest bless an exhibition of, say, Byzantine icons at a Western museum? Probably not. Such icons are now regarded primarily as paintings; any residual concern over their spiritual purpose is eased by the quasi-religious respect a museum pays to "great art." But much African art still seems religiously alive and therefore not entirely at home in a secular environment. The time has not yet come when it can be abandoned without qualm to a museum and left to the aesthetic delectation of strangers. A priest must grant dispensation.

The current show—organized by Alisa LaGamma of the Met and Lorenz Homberger of the Rietberg Museum in Zurich—emphasizes this religious quality. The curators have brought together about 200 works employed by Africans from the sub-Saharan regions to communicate with ancestors, spirits, and gods. Very often, an artist or craftsman would work hand-in-hand with a priest in order to create an object that served a specific function. On the grandest level, destiny itself might be divined—and defiantly challenged. In the late nineteenth century, for example, French colonial forces attacked the king of Dahomey; this came as no surprise to the people, for his reign was predicted to be one of turmoil. The large *Divination Portrait of King Gbehanzin as Man-Shark* presents the king as a fierce creature determined to prevail over fate itself. And yet there is something about the outstretched arms that conveys vulnerability as well as triumph—as if the shark-man were crying out in supplication and anger.



From Cameroon, the turn-of-the-previous-century *Basinjom Mask and Costume.*

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

On a less lofty note, artists and diviners sought the intervention of spirits to help solve the practical problems of life. A maternity figure might bring a child to an infertile couple; women would often anoint such figures or place ritual "medicines" into holes or cavities in the wood. Human illness also led to the creation of many divinatory works. In *Yassi Society Figure: Female Figure With Tray Base,* an ethereal female form seems to float above a bowl, as if she could provide both physical and spiritual sustenance. The strongest pieces in the show invariably occupy a strange sphere between the material and the metaphysical. *Basinjom Mask and Costume,* which was made in Cameroon in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, is an extraordinary cloak-and-mask ensemble that turns the man who wears it into a medium for a spirit that represents, according to the catalogue, "the voice of unerring prophecy." This spirit voice seems to draw its authority from land, water, and air: A tiara of feathers rises from the crocodilian head, and the figure is adorned by shells, bits of mirror, porcupine quills, the skin of a wild cat, and what looks like grass.

More than 50 different cultural traditions from the sub-Saharan region—none of them very familiar to Western viewers—are represented in this show. As a result, most people will glide over the complex and varied religious meanings and iconography on display. But the religious emphasis of the exhibit does keep the work from being regarded as simply exotic sculpture that could enhance the corner of a living room. A great power attaches to objects that are not conceived, first and foremost, as works of art. These African pieces—like Byzantine icons—are not intended to be pretty, pleasing, arty, or merely decorative. They are intended to be powerful. Their visual strength serves that perspective. They are, quite literally, a matter of life and death. If religious Africans are uncomfortable seeing this art isolated in glass boxes at the Met, Westerners, too, must sense the loss experienced by their own secular tradition—for art undisciplined by religion rarely reaches the far corners of the soul. ▬

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CLASSICAL MUSIC PETER G. DAVIS

Brass *Ring*

The Met presents a 'Ring' cycle that may be pleasing to the eye, but it's only competently sung and it's all but devoid of character and nuance.

EVERY OPERA HOUSE WITH INTERNATIONAL aspirations tackles Wagner's **Ring** cycle these days, despite the scarcity of great Wagner singers and conductors. Since the drought is far from over, the central issue in any new mounting of the mighty tetralogy now tends to be a stage director's controversial notions of what the composer really meant rather than purely musical considerations.

Not so at the Metropolitan Opera. In its effort to counter the auteur trend, the Met's version, first performed complete in 1989, seems positively radical: a stand-and-sing approach that unfolds amid old-fashioned storybook settings and on a stage devoid of ideology and fancy directorial conceits, with James Levine's famous orchestra as the main attraction. And apparently that satisfies a lot of operagoers. The Met *Ring* always draws enthusiastic audiences, and the latest outing—three full cycles during April and May—is no exception.

There is certainly room for a literal interpretation that portrays Wagner's gods, giants, dwarfs, and heroes as the Nordic myth and the libretto describe them. I would love to see just such a *Ring*, one that illuminates the characters' complex personalities and relationships while exploiting the work's theatrical excitement and dramatic potential to the hilt. If only the Met's production had the courage and imagination to do exactly that. Instead, Otto Schenk's perfunctory staging amounts to little more than functional blocking. When an effective moment does come—Wotan poignantly cradling the dying Siegmund in his arms, for example—it is either lifted from another, more creative *Ring* director or the result of an individual singer's ingenuity. One need not dip far into the Wagner literature to learn how much importance the composer attached to expressive stage movement, always closely coordinated with the music, and how hard he worked with his singers to achieve it. In this hands-off production, the cast is virtually abandoned.

I suppose Günther Schneider-Siemssen's picture-postcard sets do occasionally offer a certain Disneyland charm, but these spun-candy confections increasingly look like kitsch to me. We seem to be eavesdropping on characters idly frolicking in some sort of quaint Wagnerian theme park rather than watching the composer's apocalyptic vision of human greed, power plays, and political and emotional betrayal. It's ironic, actually. The more these banal sets strive for realistic detail, the phonier they look and the more artificial the characters who wander through them are made to appear. With so little happening onstage to nourish the spirit, the whole burden inevitably shifts to Levine's orchestra and the singers to conjure up whatever musical and dramatic splendor they can.

The thrills for this veteran *Ring*-goer, who attended the second cycle, arrived infrequently. The most impressive performance came from James Morris, whose interpretation of Wotan has grown enormously over the past decade. Morris keeps his movements to a minimum, expressing volumes of authority through understatement—exactly the quiet menace that makes his Claggart in *Billy Budd* so incomparable. Perhaps Morris's imposing bass-baritone has lost some of its richness and easy facility over the years, but there is still plenty of quality left, and his expressive nuancing of the text has added a whole new dimension to his take on the chief god.

Another distinctive feature of the Met *Ring* continues to be Plácido Domingo's eloquent Siegmund, quite this singer's best role at the moment. The part is low for a tenor, but it lies in the strongest, most comfortable area of Domingo's voice, and he takes full advantage of the fact. Deborah Voigt's creamy soprano and ardent temperament are also ideal for Sieglinde; she and Domingo have now sung these roles often enough that they can work together to create a dramatic frisson without directorial assistance.

Somewhere, over: James Morris's Wotan, in *Das Rheingold*, was the *Ring*'s rare glimmer of light.

Photograph by Jack Vartoogian.

Other welcome singers in key roles included Felicity Palmer, a wounded but proud Fricka etched in vocal acid, and later a heartbreaking Waltraute; Richard Paul Fink, a vulnerable but always dangerously sinister Alberich; Graham Clark, whose sniveling Mime is a chilling portrait of malevolence when not threatening to go over the top; and Eric Halfvarson, who effectively delineated a variety of black-bass villains. Siegfried remains a casting dilemma, although the latest stopgap measure, Wolfgang Neumann, managed the hero's job tolerably enough whenever his slippery tenor wasn't flirting with the correct pitch.

Judging from the rapturous audience approval, James Levine and Jane Eaglen made the Met's current revival more than worthwhile for many *Ring* groupies. Perhaps, but since both conductor and soprano have such potential for real greatness, their failure to tap fully into their resources was all the more disappointing.

As Brünnhilde, Eaglen most assuredly possesses the volume, amplitude, and stamina for the role, but the organization of her voice is problematical: a rich mid-range offset by weaknesses at the bottom, a less-than-soaring top, and rocky register transitions. Beyond that, her soprano is strangely colorless, and her projection of the text flat and matter-of-fact. Her size, of course, is an obstacle, although it needn't be so. Deborah Voigt, also a large woman, moves easily and gracefully to create a genuine character, but Eaglen gives the impression of a dowdy charwoman trudging from one appointment to the next. I don't doubt that there is a great Brünnhilde lurking somewhere in her, but much more vocal and dramatic coaching is needed to bring it out.

Try as I may, I fail to hear the greatness of Levine's Wagner. Yes, under his direction the Met orchestra has reached an impressive level of instrumental brilliance. But I hear very little of musical significance going on beneath the surface, no emotional core or distinctive musical character that might shape the score in a meaningful way or stamp his interpretation with an original and distinctive point of view. And those preposterous tempos! Each opera got progressively slower as the evening wore on, like a great machine winding down to a virtual state of stasis—Wotan's "Farewell" nearly stopped dead in its tracks.

One day, it would be instructive to hear a different conductor lead a Met *Ring* with this formidable orchestra, even in such a vacuous production. ■

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POP MUSIC ETHAN BROWN

Mmm, Teen-Bop

Teen pop may be the future of the music business, but its marketing—and sound, in Hanson's case—owe more to another decade: the fifties.

TEEN POP MOVES AS FAST AS THE LATE-NINETIES NASDAQ, complete with irrational exuberance and an endless stream of broken sales records. Just like the dot-com run-up, it's transformed an industry in its wake: As surely as tech fever changed Morgan Stanley Dean Witter into khakis, teen pop has elevated sellable singles over albums, star-making Svengalis over music-minded A&R men, marketable personalities over artists. Now everyone's worried about getting left behind—Eminem's new single, "The Real Slim Shady," even disses Christina Aguilera rather than rival emcees.

The Hanson family: From left, Zac, Taylor, and Isaac.

If this is the future, it looks an awful lot like the fifties. Lou Pearlman's Trans Continental Records, which manufactured both the Backstreet Boys and 'N Sync, is a triumph of the pre-rock music-business model, in which promo gigs, autograph sessions, and fan-club photos trump actual concerts. Indeed, watching members of 'N Sync toil away as judges on MTV's *Say What? Karaoke* is as depressing as reading about Colonel Parker's draining personal-appearance schedules for Elvis Presley in Peter Guralnick's *Careless Love* (though at least 'N Sync have no artistry to lose). Like Presley, 'N Sync mine black music, specifically the hip-hop-flavored-R&B "New Jack Swing" sound of the late eighties, and **No Strings Attached** (Jive) is such an overt homage, the group even enlisted the genre's creator, Teddy Riley, to produce their cover of Johnny Kemp's New Jack classic "Just Got Paid." Unlike Presley's, their appropriation lacks risk or sexuality. Even when they're singing about cybersex on "Digital Get Down," 'N Sync evoke the well-groomed rebel pose of fifties stars like Fabian and Frankie Valli.

Britney Spears has all the trappings of a distinctly Generation Y Lolita—breast-implant rumors, Catholic schoolgirl outfits, a naughty photo spread in *Rolling Stone*—but she ultimately owes more to Sandra Dee than to Madonna. She recently said she's a committed virgin who wears half-shirts only because "it's too hot to wear full-length T-shirts when I'm dancin'," and on her new album, **Oops! . . . I Did It Again** (Jive), Spears proves that she really has a lot in common with fifties-style "good girls" who write diary entries ("Dear Diary"), eagerly anticipate their first kiss ("One Kiss From You"), and bar disrespectful exes ("Don't Go Knockin' on My Door"). As with 'N Sync, the secret to Spears's musical success lies in a factory-built groove—in her case provided by Max Martin, who combines the canine pants and shuffling beats of George Clinton's "Atomic Dog" with the plastic pop he styled for Ace of Base.

Only the self-taught musicians of Hanson are up-front about their embrace of the past. The trio's 1997 debut, *Middle of Nowhere,* foreshadowed MTV's *Total Request Live* revolution, but its sound owed more to Stax and Motown than to the synthesized pop of the eighties. (They were forward-looking, too: Hanson embraced kitschy, Beck-style hip-hop with the production team the Dust Brothers.) Not surprisingly, the follow-up, **This Time Around** (Island), is billed as more mature—perhaps for the teenager whose tastes have grown up—but Hanson 2.0 isn't all that different from the original release, with sentimental keyboards and reams of vague love songs. Their songs are still catchy and their (decidedly deeper) voices are even more harmonious, but the album lacks any sense of who they are. Growing up should mean getting personal, not just new songs and new equipment to record them. Hanson may be the classicists of teen pop—they've said they started a band after hearing the Time/Life collection of fifties rock—but *This Time Around* is mostly an airless, impersonal affair. ■

Ethan Brown's reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Photograph by Kevin Mazur.

THE UNDERGROUND GOURMET **ROB PATRONITE & ROBIN RAISFELD**

Bread Winner

A well-known SoHo bakery by day becomes a reasonably priced French bistro at night; in Murray Hill, another dream of a bistro lives on.

Le Pain Quotidien, THE COUNTRY-CHIC BAKERY-CAFÉ known for seating its breakfast and lunch customers at giant communal pine tables (as if braving the subway every day weren't claustrophobic punishment enough) and encouraging them not only to make eye contact but to converse, to interact, or at the very least to pass the salt, has recently expanded its elbow-rubbing campaign beyond sandwiches and pastries to include full dinner service at its SoHo branch (100 Grand Street; 212-625-9009). Thus far, elbow rubbing has mercifully not been enforced. And the accomplished Med-French cooking is a relative steal in a neighborhood where bathroom-fixture stores display their wares the way art galleries do.

News of the nightly bakery-to-bistro conversion hasn't yet spread, so most evenings, crowding is definitely not an issue. Late one weeknight, we're the only ones occupying the 25-foot table in the front of the restaurant when an incoming couple very un-communally asks to be seated in the vacant back room before we even get a chance to pass them the salt.

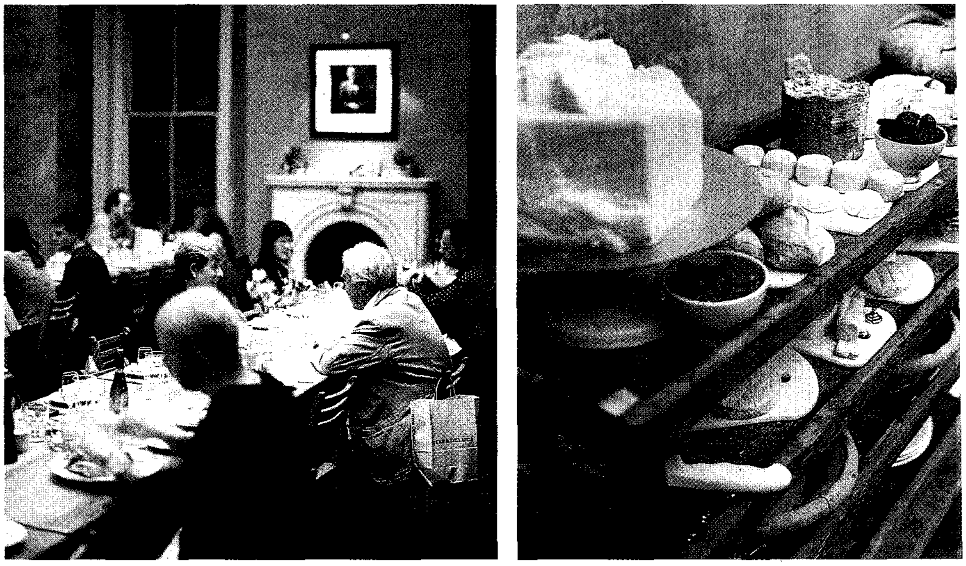
That might be a slight disappointment for owner (and gung ho communal-dining advocate) Alain Coumont, a wiry, energetic French-trained Belgian chef who started baking bread when he couldn't find any he liked well enough to supply his Brussels kitchen. Unexpectedly, the bakery business took off, and Coumont became an accidental emissary of artisanal bread, cloning his concept throughout Europe and Japan before ultimately landing in Manhattan, where he now runs three branches of Le Pain Quotidien. This past January, Coumont the itinerant baker finally reverted to his first career as a born-again chef.

The candlelit, loftlike back room, with its toasted-wheat-colored distressed-plaster walls and its almost absolute lack of adornment (save a patchwork silk tapestry on one side and an artful assortment of rusty tractor seats hanging on the other), improbably combines the monastic and the manorial. A fake fire glows in the hearth at the far wall, and above the bread-bedecked mantel hangs a black-and-white photo of a distinguished, patriarchal-looking gentleman—"an old uncle," according to Coumont.

The monastic ambience was part of Coumont's original plan: He envisioned serving a nightly fixed menu of crudités, soup, bread, a hearty dish like pot-au-feu or meat loaf, and dessert. In finicky SoHo, that one-size-fits-all approach didn't fly. So he expanded to eight appetizers and five entrées, all priced à la carte (appetizers, $7 to $13; mains, $14 to $19). But the meal still begins auspiciously with a complimentary plate of crisp, fresh crudités like haricots verts, radishes, and niçoise olives, plus croutons topped with brandade de morue or salmon mousse, and a burlap-lined basket of the bakery's excellent, earthy pain au levain and spectacular baguette.

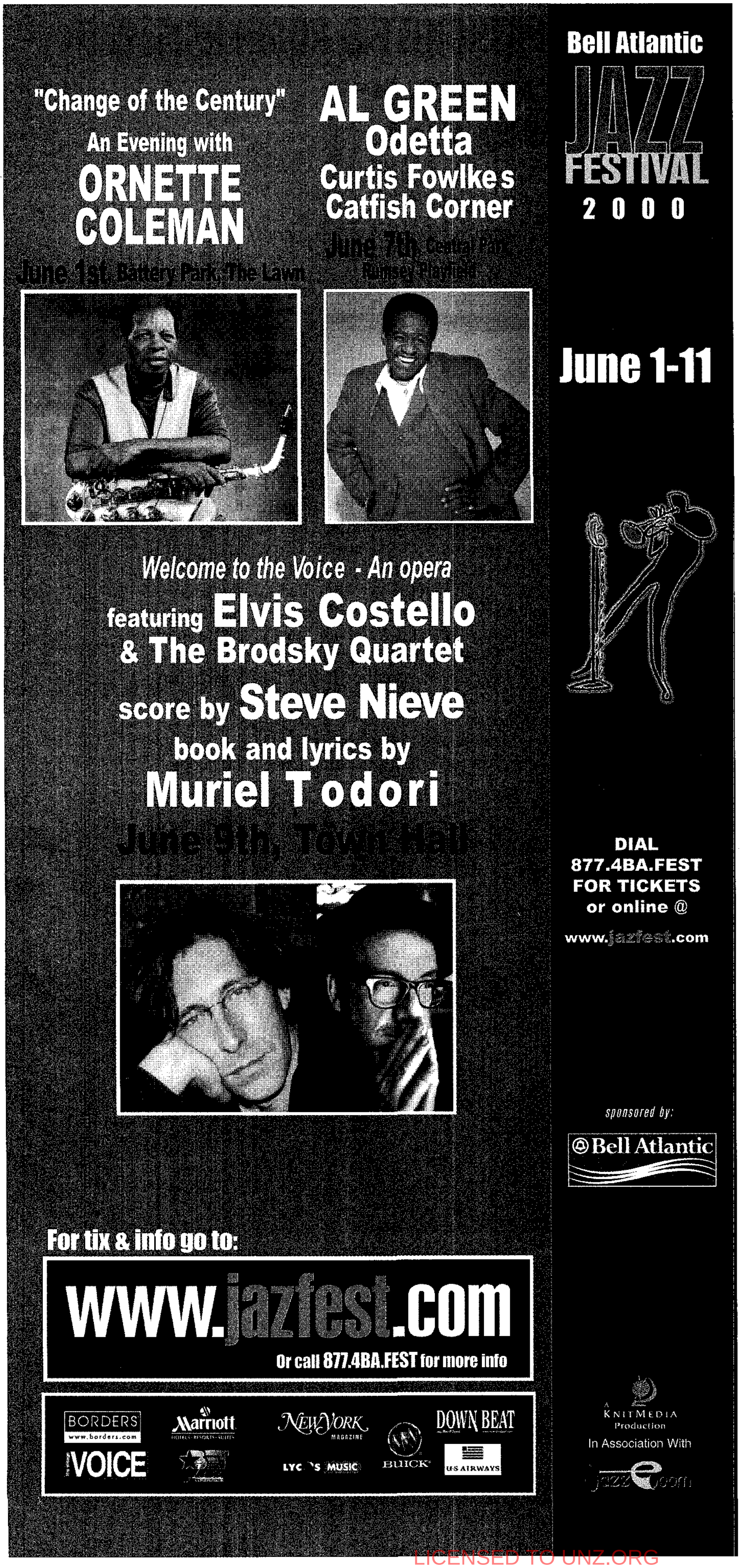
An ingredient-obsessed perfectionist, Coumont insists on the absolute finest and freshest, sniffing about and shopping around until he's reasonably satisfied he can't do any better. Thus he named his herby mesclun salad for his upstate organic farmer, Gary. Wild-game purveyor D'Artagnan supplies most of his meats, including the French duck liver that becomes an irresistibly rich and satiny-smooth foie gras terrine, served with slices of toasted pain au levain and spiced apple compote; the squab, grilled to a crackling dark brown but rare and juicy inside, enhanced with a delectable juniper jus; and the spoon-tender lamb for the slow-cooked pot-au-feu in a saffroned milk broth, with its garnish of couscous and yellow raisins.

The defining characteristic of Coumont's eclectic cooking is his unabashedly extravagant use of herbs, a habit he gleaned from the creator of *la cuisine minceur* Michel Guérard, an early mentor and his collaborator on the out-of-print *Minceur Exquise.* It's evident in his oregano-laced spaghettini with oven-roasted tomatoes, creatively accessorized with tapenade and black beans, a toothsome pasta dish as good as any you'd find in the best Italian kitchens. Rosemary and thyme sprigs are planted like birthday candles everywhere, and fried sage leaves perfume an appetizer of artichoke hearts and slender asparagus, drizzled with a truffle vinaigrette enriched with walnut oil, mustard, and chopped truffle.



Night moves: Suppertime at Le Pain Quotidien and the bakery's cheese cart.

Photographs by Joe Scafuro.



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Delicate goat-cheese-and-sage ravioli is all herbal essence, no tomato-sauced cliché. Roasted salmon is crowned with a pat of maître d'hotel butter that releases the flavors of anchovy, garlic, saffron, and pastis as it melts over the fish. The sweet, buttery buffalo mozzarella in the caprese salad is shipped from Italy and arrives at Grand Street less than a day old.

Even so, you may prefer to postpone your dairy fix until after dinner, especially if you catch sight of the cheese cart, with its seductively pungent, perfectly ripe specimens of mostly French unpasteurized cheeses (to go with the small but sufficient all-French wine list or Belgian beer), including a lusciously oozing Vacherin, a mildly tangy crottin de Chavignol, and a big-flavored, creamy Fourme d'Ambert. Order three, five, or seven, and they arrive artfully arranged on a ceramic bread board with walnuts and wine-soaked figs. And, of course, more of that empire-building bread. Afterward, chocolate-mousse cake and vanilla charlotte seem somewhat redundant.

BERNARD MASSUGER AND BOUBAKA SEGDA aren't a couple, but they might as well be. Their two-man operation at **Cosette** (163 East 33rd Street; 212-889-5489) has all the hallmarks of a traditional mom-and-pop French bistro, with Massuger greeting guests and waiting tables most nights and Segda heroically manning the stove (and dishwasher). Nearly everything about the humble 31-seat restaurant, which was known as Le Totof before the previous owners got homesick for Brittany, is classic French, from the Côtes-du-Rhône table wine to the house specialty, a Gruyère-crusted brandade de morue.

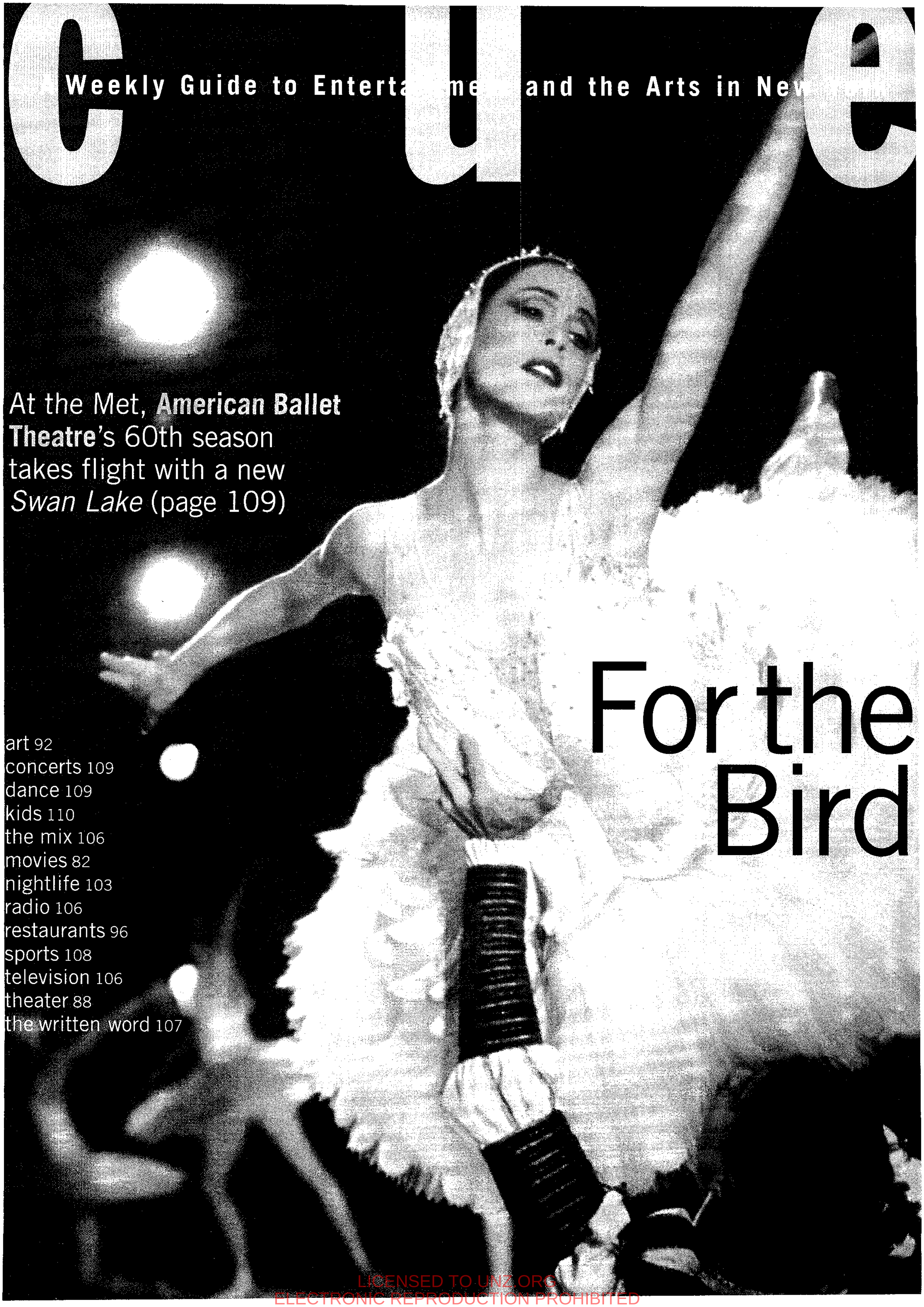
The only indication that there is a West African and not a Frenchman in the kitchen is the *soukos* music playing softly over the sound system. Segda's repertoire—rich onion soup; flaky-crusted pissaladière; pan-seared, basil-stuffed cod with ratatouille; tasty poulet rôti with potato gratin; textbook-juicy steak-frites—covers all the Gallic bases with verve and uncommon finesse. Massuger, who commutes between Murray Hill and his Asian-inflected Orienta uptown, is an especially gracious host, opening bottles to offer tastes of wine, flitting between tables to make sure all is well.

Cosette is exactly what every neighborhood should be lucky enough to have: an affordable French bistro (the average entrée price is $15) with consistently well-executed food, a friendly demeanor, and a comfortable, very low-key atmosphere. And, in the spirit of Le Pain Quotidien, excellent bread, this time courtesy of the homegrown Sullivan Street Bakery. ■

Rob Patronite and Robin Raisfeld's reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

cue

Weekly Guide to Entert me and the Arts in New



At the Met, **American Ballet Theatre**'s 60th season takes flight with a new *Swan Lake* (page 109)

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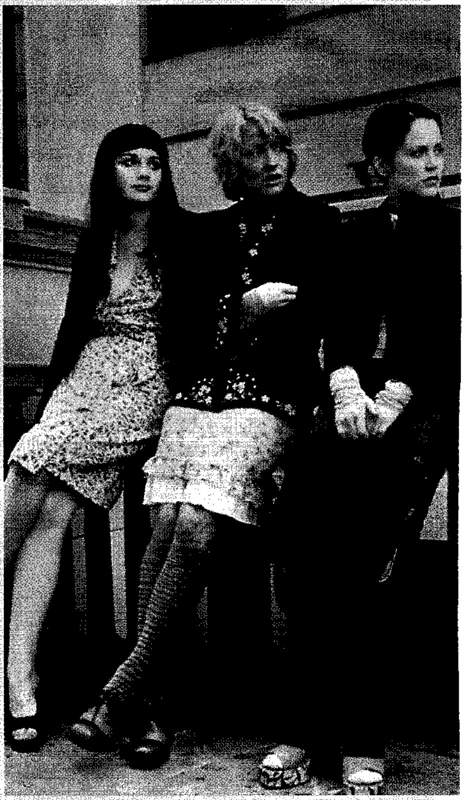
Previews
Better Late Than Never

"We want a commercial teen movie," Colette Burson's producers told her on the set of *Coming Soon.* "We want it to be bright, we want it to be funny, and we want the romance to work." Burson, a first-time director, was happy to oblige: "I wanted to make it commercial enough to go in malls all across America, but with a message in it that the girls in the audience would get." The three New York prep-school seniors at the center of *Coming Soon* (from left, Gaby Hoffman, Bonnie Root, and Tricia Vesey) are all sexually active teenagers in pursuit of orgasms. Fox, the distributors who'd bought the screenplay (which Burson co-wrote with friend Kate Robin), seemed willing to take a chance on a sophisticated movie about a risqué subject. But then the MPAA rated it NC-17, demanding cuts in seventeen places for an R rating, and Fox was no longer in the picture. The majority of the review board's objections had to do with dialogue, and all pointed to an obvious double standard Burson summarizes as " 'Muff-dive,' no; 'blow job,' yes." A couple of years and about nine edits later, the movie opens this week in one city theater, courtesy of a tiny distributor. But Burson, a 31-year-old transplant from Virginia who resembles an older Gaby Hoffman, promises to persist. She trained as a screenwriter at NYU but convinced her producers she could direct, and slowly taught herself how. "I didn't have enough money to pay for all the things I needed, and I just thought, *What do I need? Who do I talk to, what do I have to read?* I was very focused on learning how to be a director." Her next screenplay may touch on the difficulty fathers have with their preadolescent daughters' budding sexuality. "It's a really hard thing for them to come to terms with," she says. "And unfortunately a lot of these guys run studios and marketing departments." *Coming Soon* opens May 12 at Village East (Second Avenue at 12th Street).



BORIS KACHKA

New Films

Adrenaline Drive—A wild, wacky sendup of Japanese action flicks, in which a rental-car clerk stumbles upon a suitcase full of cash belonging to gangsters. He soon finds himself on the run with a goofy love-interest he meets along the way. (1 hr. 51 mins.; NR) *Loews State.*

★**All About My Mother**—Pedro Almodóvar's movie about a mother, magnificently played by Cecilia Roth, who becomes a caregiver to an entire carnival of lost souls is his best in years. In Spanish with English subtitles. (Rainer; 11/29/99) (1 hr. 41 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

American Beauty—Kevin Spacey plays a middle-aged zero living out a life of quiet desperation in spic-and-span suburbia with a harridan real-estate-agent wife (Annette Bening) and morose daughter (Thora Birch) who despise him. Sam Mendes makes his movie debut; the script is by Alan Ball. (Rainer; 9/20/99) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; CO Worldwide Cinemas; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

American Psycho—Christian Bale plays the designer serial killer and Wall Street hotshot Patrick Bateman in this overconceptualized movie adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis's controversial, overconceptualized novel. (Rainer; 4/24/00) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; UA East; Loews 84th Street; BAM Rose Cinemas; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

The Basket—Basketball again becomes a metaphor for life, this time during World War I in the Pacific Northwest. (1 hr. 44 mins.; PG) *CC Village East; CC Sutton.*

Battlefield Earth—Based on an L. Ron Hubbard novel and starring *Über*-Scientologist John Travolta, this sci-fi adventure takes place in the year 3000, by which time the earth will be colonized by mineral-consuming aliens. (1 hr. 57 mins.; PG-13) *Opens 5/12.*

★**Being John Malkovich**—This debut feature from director Spike Jonze and screenwriter Charlie Kaufman is a stunning piece of metaphysical vaudeville, a neo-slacker's spin on the sort of thing Pynchon or Borges might have dreamed up. (Rainer; 11/8/99) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Clearview's Waverly.*

The Big Kahuna—Kevin Spacey, Danny De Vito, and Peter Facinelli are industrial-lubricant salesmen holed up in a Wichita hospitality suite in this okay adaption of a play by Roger Rueff. The acting is sharp, but isn't it about time American playwrights gave this salesman-as-metaphor-for-just-about-everything shtick a rest? (Rainer; 5/8/00) (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Beekman; Sony Lincoln Square.*

★**Black and White**—James Toback's free-form movie about white teenagers, crime, and hip-hop has an aliveness that compensates for a lot of old-style plot devices. (Rainer; 4/17/00) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *UA Criterion.*

Bossa Nova—The music and the scenery are as important as any of the situations involving Amy Irving and her Spanish-speaking supporting cast in a comedy about mostly middle-aged singles looking for sex and love. In Spanish, with subtitles, and English. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**Boys Don't Cry**—Directed by first-timer Kimberly Peirce, the film is about Teena Brandon, who, as Brandon Teena, passed as a boy, romanced the girls, and was killed for her deceptions by two ex-cons in Nebraska in 1993. The talented Hilary Swank plays Brandon. (Rainer; 10/18/99) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; UA Criterion.*

Center Stage—*The Madness of King George* director Nicholas Hytner turns out this story about the aspirations of young ballet students vying for a place in a prestigious dance company, starring Amanda Schull as a determined ballerina. (1 hr. 53 mins.; PG-13) *Opens 5/12.*

The Cider House Rules—Michael Caine, Delroy Lindo, and Tobey Maguire star in Lasse Hallström's sweet coming-of-ager, based on the novel by John Irving. (2 hrs. 11 mins.; PG-13) *Clearview's Waverly; UA Criterion; UA Gemini.*

The Color of Paradise—A blind 8-year-old Iranian boy, shunned by his father, must learn his trade and much more from a blind carpenter to whom he's been apprenticed. In Persian with English subtitles. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG) *Cinema Village; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Committed—This time, the stalker's a woman (Heather Graham) and her prey is her errant husband (Luke Wilson). When he walks out, she tracks him down 2,000 miles away in El Paso and follows his comings and goings from her car. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) *CC Village East.*

★**Croupier**—Mike Hodges, the much underrated English director, teams with screenwriter Paul

'Cue' cover photograph by Paul Kolnik.

Mayersberg in this sharp, cool drama about a would-be novelist, smashingly played by Clive Owen, who works as a croupier in a posh London casino. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (1 hr. 29 mins.; NR) *Loews Village; Loews State; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**East Is East**—The great Indian actor Om Puri towers in this jagged, well-made comedy about a Pakistani father in England trying to cope with his unruly family and his own fundamentalist ways. It could have come across as a mixed-race *Life With Father*, but the complexity of Puri's performance transforms it. (Rainer; 4/24/00) (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; CC Crown Gotham; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**East-West**—A hokey, melodramatic, enjoyable Cold War drama from France about a Russian émigré physician (Oleg Menchikov) who returns to Stalin's postwar police state with his French wife (Sandrine Bonnaire) and pays the price. In French and Russian with English subtitles. (2 hrs. 5 mins.; NR) *Paris Theatre; BAM Rose Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

★**The End of the Affair**—This Neil Jordan adaptation of Graham Greene's novel has a spectral atmosphere that, at times, resembles *Brief Encounter* crossed with *Tales From the Crypt*. This impressive achievement features Ralph Fiennes as an acidulous novelist in torrid, soulful involvement with the wife (Julianne Moore) of a meek civil servant (Stephan Rea). (Rainer; 12/13/99) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *UA Gemini.*

Erin Brockovich—Julia Roberts plays a high-heeled, cleavage-enhanced, tough-talking mother of three who spearheads an investigation leading to the largest payoff ever made in a direct-action lawsuit in this intermittently enjoyable crusading-underdog film directed by Steven Soderbergh. (Rainer; 3/27/00) (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Coronet; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Sony Lincoln Square; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

The Filth and the Fury—Julien Temple creates yet another documentary about the Sex Pistols, this time without letting Malcolm McLaren take all the credit. New concert footage and an interview with Sid and Nancy, may they rest in peace. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Film Forum.*

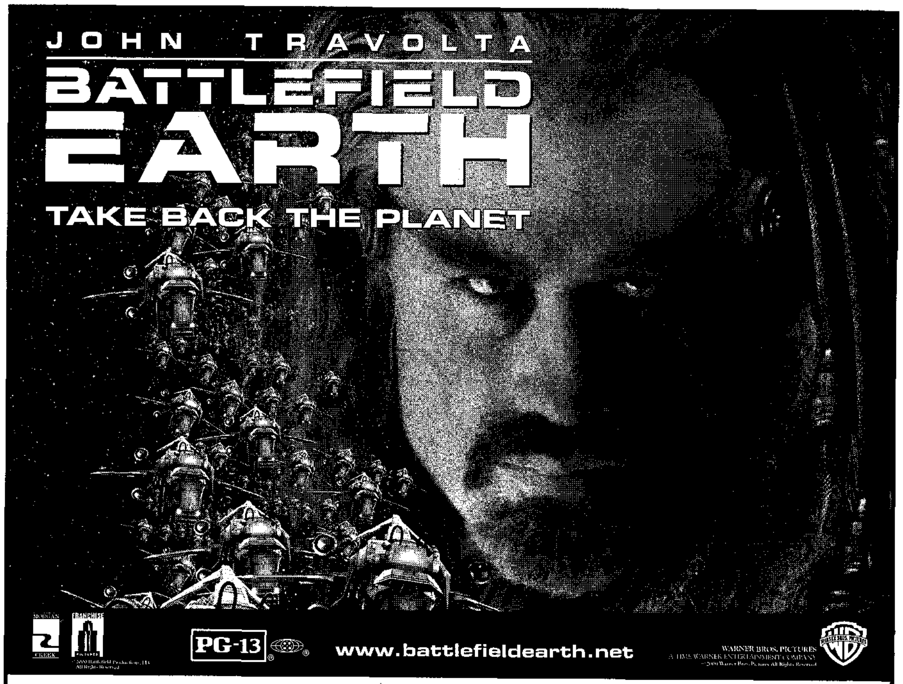
Final Destination—A young man gets a premonition and tells his friends that their plane is going to crash. They don't get on, but they die anyway. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Cinemart; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas—Prequels being all the rage, the Flintstones take us back to Fred and Barney's youth, when they were courting their future wives. (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG) *CC Village East; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Frequency—Jim Caviezal plays a Queens cop who, courtesy of a rip in the space-time continuum and an old ham radio, communicates with his firefighter father (Dennis Quaid) who perished in a blaze in 1969. The radio isn't the only thing that's ham in this misguided hunk of heartfelt mumbo-jumbo. (Rainer; 5/8/00) (2 hrs. 1 min.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

From the Edge of the City—Greek refugees from Kazakhstan, shunned in their new homeland, live on the margins of Athens and survive by hustling at night. In Greek with English subtitles. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *The Screening Room.*

Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai—Forest Whitaker gives an affecting performance as a hit man who



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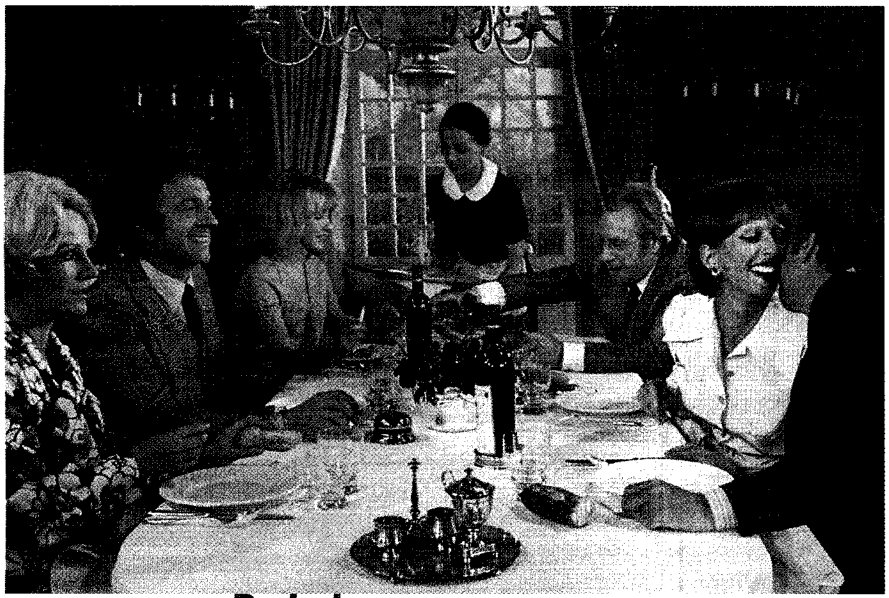


Revival

Buñuel du Jour

This year is the centennial of the birth of Luis Buñuel, and the YWCA is well into a weekend retrospective running through July. (MOMA plans its own series for the fall.) This week, Rialto Pictures releases this year's first of several restored, newly subtitled prints, 'The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie'—justifiably one of Buñuel's most popular films. A group of six well-heeled, blasé acquaintances (all with dirty little secrets) are repeatedly forced to postpone their dinner plans as various mishaps—mostly surreal dream sequences—gradually undermine reality itself. Opens May 12.

pores over ancient samurai texts in this Jim Jarmusch movie that is by turns irritating and inviting. (Rainer; 3/20/00) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center.*

The Girl Next Door—Christine Fugate's documentary on Stacy Valentine, housewife turned porn star. Stacy moved to L.A. in 1995 to pursue the career full-time, leaving behind the lout of a husband who'd persuaded her to pose in the first place. (1 hr. 24 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

★**Gladiator**—See Rainer, page 68. (2 hrs. 30 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's Ziegfeld; Loews Astor Plaza; Loews New York Twin; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Gossip—Three college students doing a journalism-class assignment on gossip manufacture a rumor that spirals out of their control, resulting in arrest, betrayal, and high drama. (R) *Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

Held Up—A fish-out-of-water story starring Jamie Foxx as a Chicago businessman stranded in a convenience store in the Southwest after his fiancée runs away and he's car-jacked. Between outdated *Deliverance*-style gags, he somehow becomes a hostage. (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG-13) *Opens 5/12.*

★**High Fidelity**—John Cusack is the owner of a retro record store in Chicago whose girlfriend (Iben Hjejle) has just walked out on him in this highly entertaining comedy directed by Stephen Frears. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; UA Criterion; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kent Triplex; Cinemart.*

Human Traffic—The directorial debut of Justin Kerrigan, a young raver himself, this drug-culture weekend in the life pulls out all the latest movie tricks, with funny and likable characters living it up in Wales. *CC Angelika Film Center.*

★**The Hurricane**—Denzel Washington gives a powerhouse performance as Rubin "Hurricane" Carter in this film about the middleweight contender's fight for exoneration after he was wrongfully arrested on a murder rap and imprisoned for almost nineteen years. The entire film needed to be as ferocious as Washington's performance. (Rainer; 1/10/00) (2 hrs. 26 mins.; R) *UA Criterion.*

I Dreamed of Africa—See Rainer, page 68. (1 hr. 52 mins.; PG-13) *UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea West; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Sony Lincoln Square; Whitestone; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Idiots—Director Lars von Trier's latest Dogma film, about a commune of sorts whose inhabitants pretend to be mentally retarded, is at various times funny, poignant, and offensive. (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema.*

Into My Heart—Rob Morrow and Jake Weber play Ben and Adam, best friends who went to Andover and Columbia together, along the way meeting the love of Adam's life, Nina (Claire Forlani), who cheats with Ben. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

★**Joe Gould's Secret**—Stanley Tucci directed and co-stars in this movie about *New Yorker* writer Joseph Mitchell and his relationship with Joe Gould, the Greenwich Village crackbrained philosopher played by Ian Holm. There's a bit too much of a nimbus around Gould's head, but the film is extraordinarily well acted. (Rainer; 4/17/00) (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) *CC Village East; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Kadosh—The story of two sisters who live in Mea Sharim, Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox Jewish quarter, and whose lives and marriages are dictated by the strict hermetic community. In Hebrew with English subtitles. (1 hr. 50 mins.; NR) *North Shore Towers.*

Keeping the Faith—Edward Norton is a hotshot priest and Ben Stiller is a hotshot rabbi in this wan romantic comedy that wants us to think Noël Coward but too often has us thinking Aaron Spelling. (4/24/00) (2 hrs. 9 mins.; PG-13) *Loews Village; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**The Last September**—A lovely, if somewhat too precious, adaptation of Elizabeth Bowen's novel about the passing of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy. Fine performances by Maggie Smith, Michael Gambon, and Fiona Shaw help divert us from the blander ones. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (1 hr. 44 mins.; R) *CC Village East; CC Eastside Playhouse.*

Love and Basketball—First-time writer-director Gina Prince-Bythewood's movie is about a girl ball player (Sanaa Lathan) and her on-again-off-again romance with the star player (Omar Epps) she grew up with. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (2 hrs. 6 mins.; PG-13) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Sutton; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; BAM Rose Cinemas; Canarsie; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

My Dog Skip—The late Willie Morris's best-selling memoir about his growing up in Mississippi with his beloved fox terrier is now a sweet Kevin Bacon vehicle about a boy growing up in Mississippi with a Jack Russell terrier. (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG) *Kew Gardens Cinemas; Main Street Cinemas.*

The New Eve—Cesar-winning actress Karin Viard plays Camille, a modern woman who, after countless flings, finds herself heavily involved with a married father of two. Complications ensue. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

Peace of Mind—The producers of this documentary on the Arab-Israeli peace process gave seven Jewish and Palestinian teenagers the video equipment to film their evolving friendship after they'd met in a U.S. summer camp. The result, a series of unique insider stories about coming of age under the conflict, has garnered several documentary awards since its November premiere in Jerusalem. (NR) *Screens 5/9–5/11 at the Makor Center.*

Return to Me—David Duchovny is a widowed architect who meets and romances Minnie Driver, playing a waitress recovering from a heart transplant. (1 hr. 56 mins.; PG) *UA Union Square; Loews State; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews 72nd St. East; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

The Road to El Dorado—Dreamworks' animated movie has some thrilling visual sequences and lots of corn. Actors voicing the animated characters include Kenneth Branagh, Kevin Kline, and, unmistakably, Rosie Perez. (Rainer; 4/10/00) (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG) *CC Village East; UA Gemini; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Romeo Must Die—In this hi-fi action flick based loosely on *Romeo and Juliet*, Hong Kong film veteran Jet Li plays an ex-cop looking to avenge his little brother's murder in gang-torn Oakland. (1

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.

Photograph courtesy of Rialto Pictures.

hr. 56 mins.; R) *Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

Rules of Engagement—Yet another movie about military discipline: A colonel turned lawyer (Tommy Lee Jones) must defend his friend (Samuel Jackson), who saved his life in Vietnam but is now accused of killing civilian demonstrators. (2 hrs. 3 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's 59th Street East; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kew Gardens Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Screwed—Norm Macdonald is a bitter chauffeur who, with his best friend (Dave Chappelle), plans to kidnap his boss's dog. But when the pet escapes and returns to her, she thinks her driver's the one who's been kidnapped. Lots of violent slapstick. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Opens 5/12.*

Shadow Boxers—This documentary on women boxers focuses on Lucia Rijker, a Dutch-Indonesian athlete who defies most stereotypes about the sport. (1 hr. 12 mins.; NR) *Opens 5/12.*

The Sixth Sense—Bruce Willis, Toni Collette, a little boy with a dark ability, and a twist. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) *UA Criterion.*

The Skulls—*Dawson's Creek* star Joshua Jackson plays a New Haven townie who gets accepted to Yale—which is good—and then joins a secret, elitist fraternity—which is bad. (PG-13) *Loews State.*

Spin the Bottle—Proof that Amy Sohn will never go away: She wrote the screenplay for this account of a kissing game that goes awry during a small reunion of old friends in a summer cabin. (1 hr. 26 mins.; NR) *Opens 5/12.*

Third World Cop—Jamaica's highest-grossing production yet, this local action flick features a cop named Capone and his old friend, the gun-running kingpin Ratty. Each tries to persuade the other to break ranks. (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) *Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

Time Code—Mike Figgis's movie utilizes state-of-the-art digital video-camera technology to tell four separate, related stories, all shot in one take. The result is less aesthetic breakthrough than stunt. (Rainer; 5/8/00) (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Sony Lincoln Square.*

★**Topsy-Turvy**—Mike Leigh's movie about Gilbert and Sullivan and what led to *The Mikado* is an uncharacteristic work for a filmmaker devoted almost entirely to modern-day movies about the lower-middle classes, but Leigh moves right into the late-Victorian era without a hitch. Jim Broadbent's Gilbert and Allan Corduner's Sullivan are marvelously played. (Rainer; 12/20/99) (2 hrs. 41 mins.; R) *North Shore Towers.*

28 Days—Sandra Bullock is a pill-popping alcoholic who, after ruining her sister's wedding while sloshed, is sentenced to a touchy-feely rehab center. But what about her pill-popping alcoholic boyfriend? (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; UA Marboro; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island; North Shore Towers.*

★**U-571**—Jonathan Mostow's WWII sub thriller is engagingly old-fashioned. Matthew McConaughey is the lieutentant who commandeers the takeover of a German U-boat in order to seize a coding machine called the Enigma. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (2 hrs. ; PG-13) *Clearview's Waverly; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Coronet; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Up at the Villa—See Rainer, page 68. (1 hr. 55 mins.; PG-13) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

The Virgin Suicides—The material—five suburban adolescent girls kill themselves off, poetically, inexplicably—is perhaps too woozy for the rueful, mythological treatment it gets here, but debut director Sofia Coppola has a fine, fresh eye and a way with actors, among them Kirsten Dunst, James Woods and Kathleen Turner. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square.*

★**Where the Heart Is**—As Novalee Nation, the pregnant and barefoot teenager who becomes a species of small-town saint, Natalie Portman has a radiance that makes this cloyingly ramshackle movie tolerable. She's aided by a good supporting cast, including Ashley Judd and Stockard Channing. (Rainer; 5/8/00) (2 hrs.; PG-13) *UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; Bay Plaza; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Art Greenwich Twin—97–101 Greenwich Ave., at W. 12th St. (212-929-3350) *Gladiator.*

CC Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) *All About My Mother; East is East; Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai; Human Traffic; Time Code; Up at the Villa.*

CC Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (212-529-6799) *Committed; High Fidelity; Joe Gould's Secret; The Basket; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Last September; The Road to El Dorado.*

Cinema Village—22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) *The Color of Paradise; The New Eve.*

Clearview's Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (777-FILM#603) *Being John Malkovich; The Cider House Rules; U-571.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) *Eyes Wide Shut; The Filth and the Fury.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Loews Village—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (50-LOEWS#952) *American Psycho; Croupier; Erin Brockovich; Keeping the Faith; Love and Basketball; Rules of Engagement; The Virgin Suicides.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) *American Beauty; Beau Travail; Boys Don't Cry; Into My Heart; The Idiots.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (212-334-2100) *From the Edge of the City; The Girl Next Door.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square—13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) *28 Days; Bossa Nova; Final Destination; Frequency; Gladiator; I Dreamed of Africa; Return to Me; The Big Kahuna; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) *28 Days; High Fidelity; I Dreamed of Africa; Where the Heart Is.*

Clearview's Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#597) *28 Days; Frequency; Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; The Virgin Suicides; U-571.*

Clearview's Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#614) *I Dreamed of Africa.*

Loews 19th St. East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (50-LOEWS#858) *American Psycho; Erin Brockovich; High Fidelity; Love and Basketball; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Loews Kips Bay Theatre—570 Second Ave. (505–6397#558) *American Psycho; Erin Brockovich; Frequency; Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; Love and Basketball; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Virgin Suicides; U-571.*

42nd–60th Streets

CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) *Frequency; High Fidelity; Keeping the Faith.*

Previews

The Flick's the Thing

The premise is intriguing—Shakespeare's pearls restrung on a modern plotline about corporate conglomerates and the mass media, with Ethan Hawke as Hamlet (pictured, below left, with Diane Venora and Kyle McLachlan). Hamlet, a young filmmaker, asks "to be or not to be" in the "Action" section of Blockbuster Video; the conscience-catching play-within-the-play is a sleek video montage; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern report to Claudius via speaker-phone. (Bill Murray is Polonius.) Hey, if Leo and Keanu can play the Bard, why not Ethan? Opens May 12.

Photograph by Larry Riley.

Revival

Pièce De Résistance

French television's decade-long refusal to air 'The Sorrow and the Pity,' Marcel Ophuls's 1969 documentary about the impact of German occupation on one small town, proved the filmmaker's central point: Charles de Gaulle's France had conveniently chosen to forget its passive support for Vichy France. (In Ophuls's closing scene, Maurice Chevalier salutes the Allied victory and sings "Sweepin' the Clouds Away.") A small art house on the Left Bank finally released the four-hour-plus picture, and in 1972 it was nominated for a Best Documentary Oscar. Next week, Film Forum becomes the first American theater in fifteen years to play it, and the first ever to screen it in French with English subtitles. Runs May 12 through May 25.

CC Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (212-759-2262) *East is East.*

CC Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (212-755-3020) *The Last September.*

CC Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) *Love and Basketball; The Basket.*

Clearview's 59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (777-FILM#615) *Rules of Engagement.*

Clearview's Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (777-FILM#602) *Gladiator.*

CO Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *American Beauty; Girl, Interrupted; Magnolia; The Ninth Gate; Pitch Black; The Whole Nine Yards.*

Loews 42nd Street E Walk—42nd Street at Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#572) *28 Days; American Psycho; Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; I Dreamed of Africa; Keeping the Faith; Love and Basketball; Romeo Must Die; Rules of Engagement; Sunset Boulevard; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Virgin Suicides.*

Loews Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#699) *Gladiator.*

Loews Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Erin Brockovich; U-571.*

Loews State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (50-LOEWS#901) *Adrenaline Drive; Croupier; Return to Me; The Skulls.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) *East-West.*

UA Criterion—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (212-354-0900) *Black and White; Boys Don't Cry; The Cider House Rules; High Fidelity; The Hurricane; The Sixth Sense.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East—210 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#763) *Frequency; Keeping the Faith; The Virgin Suicides; Where the Heart Is.*

Clearview's Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (777-FILM#606) *The Big Kahuna.*

Clearview's First & 62nd St.—400 E. 62nd St. (777-FILM#957) *28 Days; American Psycho; Return to Me; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Virgin Suicides; Up at the Villa; Where the Heart Is.*

Clearview's Park and 86th St.—125 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#604) *Erin Brockovich; Joe Gould's Secret.*

Loews 72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (50-LOEWS#704) *Return to Me.*

Loews New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (50-LOEWS#698) *Gladiator.*

Loews Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (50-LOEWS#964) *28 Days; Gladiator; High Fidelity; I Dreamed of Africa; Love and Basketball; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; U-571.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) *American Psycho.*

UA Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) *The Cider House Rules; The End of the Affair; I Dreamed of Africa; The Road to El Dorado.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (777-FILM#864) *Where the Heart Is.*

Clearview's Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (777-FILM#609) *Keeping the Faith; U-571.*

Clearview's Olympia—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (777-FILM#613) *Gladiator; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) *All About My Mother; Bossa Nova; Croupier; East is East; The Color of Paradise; Up at the Villa.*

Loews 84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (50-LOEWS#701) *28 Days; American Psycho; Final Destination; Love and Basketball; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; U-571.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) *Final Destination; Gladiator; Rules of Engagement; Scream 3; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) *Gladiator; Love and Basketball; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado.*

Sony Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (50-LOEWS#638) *Erin Brockovich; Frequency; Gladiator; High Fidelity; I Dreamed of Africa; Keeping the Faith; Rules of Engagement; The Big Kahuna; The Virgin Suicides; Time Code.*

Bronx

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (777-FILM#833) *Final Destination; Frequency; Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; Love and Basketball; Romeo Must Die; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) *Final Destination; Gladiator; Love and Basketball; Romeo Must Die; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; U-571.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) *Final Destination; Frequency; Gladiator; I Dreamed of Africa; Keeping the Faith; Love and Basketball; Romeo Must Die; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; U-571.*

Brooklyn

BAM Rose Cinemas—30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770) *American Psycho; East-West; Joe Gould's Secret; Love and Basketball.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) *Boys Don't Cry; The Cup; Rules of Engagement; The Road to El Dorado.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) *Gladiator; Love and Basketball; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Clearview's Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (718-596-9113) *Frequency; High Fidelity; Keeping the Faith; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; Up at the Villa.*

CO Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy., at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) *Gladiator; High Fidelity; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) *American Psycho; Final Destination; Gladiator; Love and Basketball; Romeo Must Die; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; Third World Cop; U-571.*

Pavilion—188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) *Frequency; Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; U-571.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) *Gladiator; Love and Basketball; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; U-571.*

UA Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) *28 Days; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

Photograph courtesy of Milestone Films.

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) *Final Destination; Frequency; Gladiator; I Dreamed of Africa; Keeping the Faith; Rules of Engagement; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

Queens

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) *Frequency; Gladiator; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) *Final Destination; Frequency; High Fidelity; Keeping the Faith.*

CO Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Call theater for showtimes.*

College Point Multiplex—28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) *28 Days; Final Destination; Frequency; Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; Love and Basketball; Romeo Must Die; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; U-571.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) *Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Kaufman Astoria Cinema—38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) *28 Days; American Beauty; Frequency; Gossip; I Dreamed of Africa; Keeping the Faith; Romeo Must Die; Scream 3; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado.*

Kew Gardens Cinemas—81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) *East-West; Erin Brockovich; My Dog Skip; Return to Me; Rules of Engagement; The Road to El Dorado; Up at the Villa.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) *Frequency; Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; My Dog Skip; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) *28 Days; Kadosh; Topsy-Turvy.*

Plaza—103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) *Gladiator; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

Sony Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave., at Bell Blvd., Bayside (777-FILM#712) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (777-FILM#733) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (777-FILM#735) *Call theater for showtimes.*

UA Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) *Gladiator; Love and Basketball; Rules of Engagement; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

UA Brandon Cinema—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) *Gladiator; I Dreamed of Africa; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas.*

UA Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) *Gladiator; Love and Basketball.*

UA Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) *Final Destination; I Dreamed of Africa; Keeping the Faith; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

UA Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) *28 Days; Gladiator; Love and Basketball; Return to Me; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

UA Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) *28 Days; I Dreamed of Africa; Rules of Engagement; Where the Heart Is.*

UA Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) *28 Days; Frequency; Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; Where the Heart Is.*

Staten Island

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) *28 Days; Erin Brockovich; Frequency; Gladiator; I Dreamed of Africa; Keeping the Faith; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

UA Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) *Frequency; Gladiator; Keeping the Faith; U-571.*

UA Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) *28 Days; Final Destination; Frequency; Gladiator; I Dreamed of Africa; Keeping the Faith; Love and Basketball; Rules of Engagement; The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas; The Road to El Dorado; U-571; Where the Heart Is.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—Through 5/14: "Women Film Pioneers." 5/13: *Back to God's Country* (1920); *Something New* (1920). 5/14: *A Sister to Carmen* (1913); *The Grub Stake* (1922). 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). $4.50–$8.50; free to members and children under 4.

Anthology Film Archives—5/10: New Filmmakers: Shorts; *Rendezvous in Samarkind.* 5/11–5/12: Turkish Film Festival. 5/11: *A Jazz Story; Lalei'de Dir Azize.* 5/12: *On the Shore; Gemide.* 5/13–5/14: "Shorts by Joseph Cornell." 5/15: Turkish Film Festival: *Momentum; Tulip Is Coming?; The Third Page.* 32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); $8.

BAM Rose Cinemas—5/9–5/10: *Le Samourai* (1967). 5/11: *In Memoriam Tension* (1949). 5/12: *Memories of Underdevelopment* (1968). 5/13: *Drowning by Numbers* (1988). 5/14: *Bonnie and Clyde* (1980). 5/15: *Grüningers Fall* (1997). 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770).

Cinema Classics—"Noir: Visions of Dark." 5/9: *Roadhouse* (1948). 5/10–5/11: *The Window* (1949). 5/12–5/14: *The Lady From Shanghai* (1948). 5/15–5/16: *While the City Sleeps* (1956). 332 E. 11th St. (212-675-6692); $5.

Film Forum—Through 5/11: Stanley Kubrick Retrospective. 5/9–5/10: *The Killing* (1956); *Killer's Kiss* (1955). 5/11: *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999). 209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110); $9.

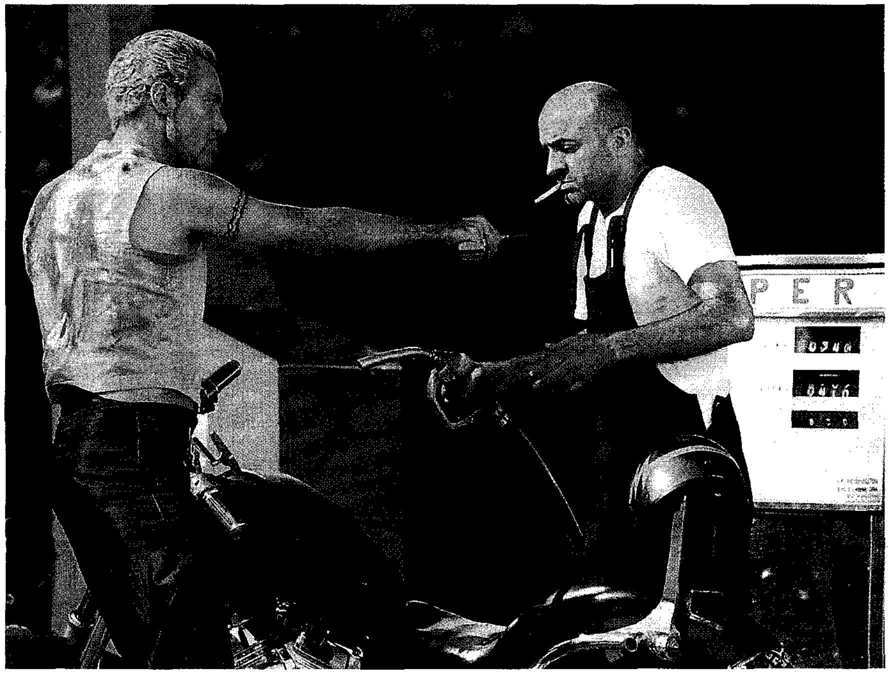
Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—Through 5/18: "American Dreamer: Burt Lancaster." 5/9: *The Killers* (1946); *Apache* (1954). 5/10: *From Here to Eternity* (1953); *Ulzana's Raid* (1972); *Go Tell the Spartans* (1978). 5/11: *Elmer Gantry* (1960); *Apache; Ulzana's Raid.* 5/12: *Apache; Ulzana's Raid.* 5/13: *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957); *Elmer Gantry.* 5/14: *Gunfight at OK Corral* (1957); *Go Tell the Spartans.* 5/15: *Go Tell the Spartans; Sweet Smell of Success.* 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600); $8.50, $5 members, $4.50 seniors, $3 "Movies for Kids."

Ocularis—5/14: *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976). 5/15: "A Monkey in the Wrench: Selections From the NY Underground Film Festival 2000." At Galapagos, 70 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-388-8713); $5.

The Screening Room—Opening 5/12: "Japanese Outlaw Masters." *Female Convict "Scorpion"—Jailhouse 41* (1972); *Black Tight Killers* (1966); *Ecstasy of Angels* (1970); *Go, Go, Second Time Virgin* (1969). 5/14: "Weekend Classics": *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961); *Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory* (1971). 5/12–5/13: "Midnight Madness": *Valley of the Dolls* (1967). 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100); $9 ($6 for Sunday-brunch patrons).

Two Boots Pioneer Theater—5/9–5/10: *Spin the Bottle.* 5/11–5/12: *The Love Machine.* 5/13: *All I Wanna Do.* 5/14: *The Big Dis.* 5/15: *The Love Machine.* 155 E. 3rd St. (212-254-3300); $9, $6 seniors.

YWCA Cine-Club—Through 7/30: "The Surreal World of Luis Buñuel." 5/13–5/14: *Susana* (1951); *El Bruto* (1952). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (212-735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.



Photograph by Alessio Viola.

Festival

Take the L Train

As that alt.SoHo across the river grows to accommodate artists of all persuasions, the third annual Williamsburg Brooklyn Film Festival expands to a five-day affair, premiering more than 40 movies—American, international, experimental, documentaries, shorts—within the grand twenties-era Commodore Theater. This year's mission stresses innovation in themes and technology. *Venti* (pictured), the story of an unconventional Italian romance, is cut into episodes that begin and end with every cigarette smoked, and the German *Sun Alley* is a retro piece with a difference—depicting hipsters coming of age in seventies East Berlin. Runs May 10 through May 14 at the Commodore, 329 Broadway, Brooklyn (call 718-384-7259 for showtimes).

theater

Hypatia...Small Craft Warnings...The RSC

Broadway

Now Playing

Aida—The epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian, with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice. Directed by Robert Falls with a book by Linda Woolverton and David Henry Hwang. Sets and costumes by Bob Crowley. $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).*

Amadeus—Nearly two decades after its London and Broadway triumphs, Peter Shaffer's play returns, again directed by Sir Peter Hall. Michael Sheen purrs, hisses, and farts as Mozart; David Suchet, known best as Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot on *Mystery!*, plays his conniving nemesis, Salieri. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Annie Get Your Gun—Bernadette Peters plays the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati who eclipses her lover, Frank Butler (played by Tom Wopat), in Buffalo Bill's traveling Wild West Show. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).*

Beauty and the Beast—Disney's beast is back (No, not the mouse). Andrea McArdle blanches and blushes as the fair maiden; Steve Blanchard roars and repents as the Beast. $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).*

Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. The supporting cast delivers staunchly. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Susan Egan and Michael Hall. $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 3/19/98. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).*

Cats—Six lives and counting. $40–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. Through 6/25. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (212-239-6200).*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Contact—This is billed as "a dance play by Susan Stroman and John Weidman," with what little there is of a play mostly by Weidman and the variety and plenitude of the dancing all Stroman. Its two shorter pieces and concluding longer one are of uneven merit but never without interest. Boyd Gaines, a delightful actor and inspired amateur dancer, performs with aplomb. Backed up by a terrific ensemble, Deborah Yates triumphs as the girl in yellow; as dancer, actress, woman, she is every man's dream and headed for a manifest career. (Simon: 10/25/99.) $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Copenhagen—A major hit in London, Michael Frayn's heady play about what might have happened when German physicist Werner Heisenberg visited Niels Bohr in 1941 stars Philip Bosco, Blair Brown, and Michael Cumpsty. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dame Edna: The Royal Tour—Other performers have invented running stage personas for themselves like Australia's Barry Humphries and his Dame Edna Everage, but have they been this amusing? I am prepared to declare him the funniest man in today's theater. Also the funniest woman. (Simon: 11/2/99.) $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

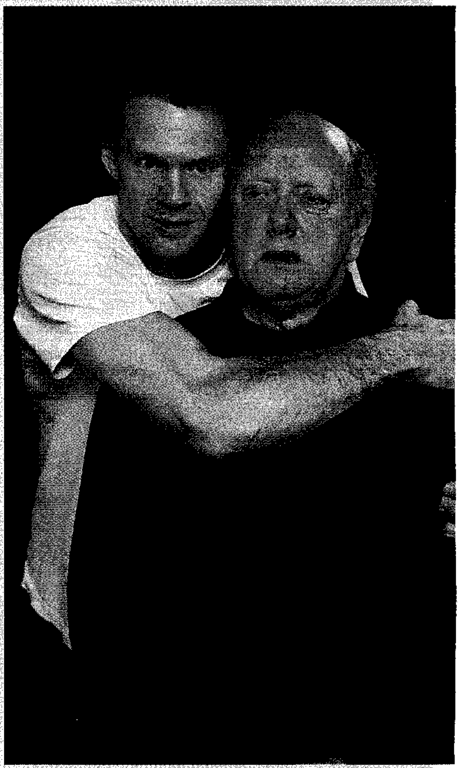
Dirty Blonde—Brash actress-author Claudia Shear stars in her new play about two Gotham singles who meet at the grave of Mae West, sampling delicious vignettes from the life of the woman who said, "I'm no angel, but I've spread my wings a bit." $55–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Footloose—Kevin Bacon is not a part of this maxi-musical adaptation, but the lead does have his haircut. $20–$75. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 10/22/98. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).*

Onstage
No Second Acts

Ollie North the talk-show host and Monica Lewinsky the handbag designer have proven there are indeed second acts in American life. But there are still no second acts in the Ensemble Studio Theatre's 23-year-old one-act marathon, the series that nearly single-handedly revived the one-act play and put this company on the map. To EST's artistic director, Curt Dempster, the one-act form is holy: "If you look back at the history of American playwrights, so many of them made breakthrough productions with their one-acts: Marsha Norman, Wendy Wasserstein, David Mamet, John Guare, Lanford Wilson, Arthur Miller, Sam Shepard . . ." He lists another dozen names, and what's most impressive about his compendium is that EST has produced (and Dempster has directed) one-acts by almost all of the playwrights he mentions. Marathon 2000's slate of thirteen new works includes Dempster's staging of a play by longtime member Leslie Ayvazian, as well as contributions from David Ives, Warren Leight, and Romulus Linney (pictured, from left, Ross Gibby and Peter Maloney in Linney's *Madmen*). With all the action, it's hard to remember that the one-act was nearly dead before EST's first Marathon in 1977. "The one-act really began to lose favor when the wave of commercialism hit the theater in the fifties and early sixties," Dempster explains. "In the commercial world, it takes a lot of imagination and a lot of enterprise to produce one-acts, and not a whole lot of producers have those qualities." Dempster sees the one-act as a nearly lost art and an invaluable and inexpensive genre for young writers. "We have ongoing relationships with 95 percent of our writers," he says, "whether it's Horton Foote or Arthur Miller or—let's see, what's this guy's name? Oh! Steve Feffer! I think he's from Indiana or somewhere—his play came in and—bang! It was terrific. I mean, we're not trying to create hits. We want to encourage writers who want to develop a life in the theater." (See "Off–Off Broadway.")

LOGAN HILL



Photograph by David Cross.

Fosse—A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago.* $65–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Green Bird—The enchanting surprise of the month, if not the season, this 1765 fairy-tale comedy by Carlo Gozzi is sheer delight. It includes a talking giant sculptured head, a statue that comes to life, a sorceress's garden, and singing apples. But if you think this is kiddie stuff, think again. It is really for adults, although children will get enough of it to enjoy it, too. Though more modest in scale than director Julie Taymor's other triumph, the song of the Bird is sweeter, smarter, and subtler than the roar of the Lion. (Simon: 4/25/00.) $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jackie Mason—Much Ado About Everything—Jackie Mason is not so funny as Dame Edna (who is?) but still damned funny. He is politically incorrect, and glories in it with ecstatic gloat. (Simon: 1/17/00.) $65–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jesus Christ Superstar—Yeah, he's the Messiah, but what he really wants to do is sing in Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical. $26–$81. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4100).*

Kiss Me, Kate—With a score jammed with some of the best-known theater songs ever written, it's no wonder each generation has rediscovered this gem since its 1948 Broadway premiere. Now Brian Stokes Mitchell and Marin Mazzie interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple—two actors who play the Shrew's Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical. $25–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. (Simon: 12/1/97:) $20–$90. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).*

Miss Saigon—A big helicopter stars in this adaptation of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly.* $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. Through 12/31. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Moon for the Misbegotten—Thanks to Eugene O'Neill's artistry, the character of Josie is true enough to be a riveting character when incarnated by the right actress, and Cherry Jones is a transcendent actress; when Cherry is in bloom, she is, like her namesake trees, worth a pilgrimage from the four corners of the earth. As James, Gabriel Byrne gives a complementarily moving performance as a lost soul in a dying body. There is a meatiness, a tenacity of grip, and, finally, a grandeur which this production captures. (Simon: 4/3/00.) $60–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Music Man—*See Simon, p. 72.* $40–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Eleven leads, eleven years, and roughly 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Real Thing—The clever Tom Stoppard tells a fairly simple story as trickily, as cleverly as possible. He has lots of fun with his assorted adulteries, and his dialogue suitably sparkles. The current revival is less pleasurable than the 1984 American premiere, which had the proper sets and was better directed. Still, Stoppard is one of our few brainy and literate dramatists and once again warms up Broadway's intellectual climate by several balmy degrees. (Simon: 4/24/00.) $35–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).*

Previews
Big Mac

The verbal contortionist Mac Wellman has spent his career producing perplexing and often delightful works like 'Fnu Lnu,' 'Bodacious Flapdoodle,' 'Girl Gone,' and 'Infrared,' and he shows no signs of slowing down. His new play, 'Hypatia' (featuring, from left, Fred Tietz, Jeremy Proctor, Sophia Fox-Long, and Michael Cecchi), casts the pilloried fifth-century mathematician and pagan philosopher Hypatia as a mythical being who periodically intervenes in human history with gifts like the zero and the first machine. Previews begin May 10. (See "Off–Off Broadway.")

The Ride Down Mt. Morgan—Shakespearean star and Starfleet captain Patrick Stewart plays Lyman Felt, a bigamist businessman who must confront his two wives after a terrible accident, in Arthur Miller's drama. $55–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 7/23. *Ambassador Theatre, 215 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).*

Riverdance—This revamped version returns to New York with a more global feel, featuring flamenco and South African vocals, along with Irish singer Brian Kennedy and dancers Pat Roddy and Eileen Martin. $25–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).*

Rose—*See Simon, p. 72.* $30–$60. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45 St. (212-239-6200).*

Saturday Night Fever—Flared pants! $30–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Minskoff Theater, 200 W. 45th St. (212-307-4100).*

Swing!—The dance marathon begins, with requisite suspenders and flared skirts, in this new musical. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Taller Than a Dwarf—Parker Posey and Matthew Broderick star in Elaine May's comedy. $25–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

True West—Sam Shepard's dysfunctional brothers are brought back to life by two old friends: Philip Seymour Hoffman and John C. Reilly, most recently spotted together in the film *Magnolia.* $65–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 6/18. *Circle-in-the-Square Theatre, W. 50th St., West of Broadway (212-239-6200).*

Waiting in the Wings—Noël Coward's fiftieth play (1960) still remains a minor gem in that bittersweet mode at which Coward excelled. A piece about former star stage actresses living out their declining years in the Wings, a less-than-lavish retirement home, the play is a wise and compassionate address of the problems of aging and death that confront us all. To miss this play (starring Rosemary Harris and Lauren Bacall) would be a major folly; not having a good time at it is a virtual—no, a real—impossibility. (Simon: 1/10/99). $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Wild Party—Apparently, the partying on Broadway didn't end on New Year's Eve. Toni Collette, Eartha Kitt, and Mandy Patinkin throw a Jazz Age bash in a new musical, the second this season with the same title and source, by Michael John LaChiusa and George C. Wolfe. $40–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200).*

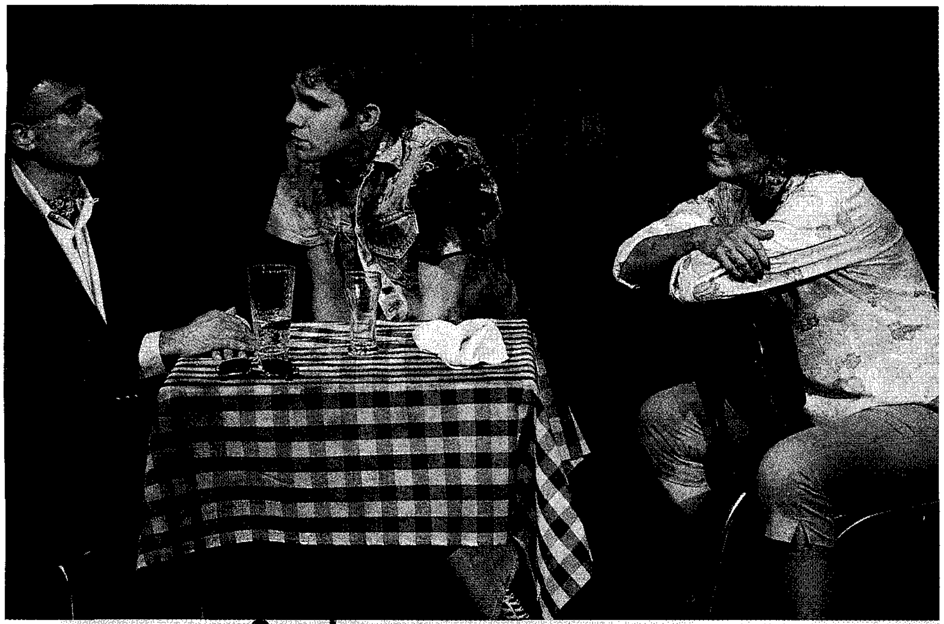
Off Broadway
Previews and Openings

The Brothers Berg—A new play by Richard Abrons about a rabbi and a novelist. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (212-647-0202).*

Bruce Vilanch: Almost Famous—A one-man show about the mad, mad, mad world of Tinseltown by *Hollywood Squares* regular and comedy writer Bruce Vilanch. $35–$40. Mon.–Sat. at 8:30. In previews for a 5/11 opening. Through 6/11. *Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-307-4100).*

Dong Dong Touching the Moons—Composer Jin Hi Kim presents a multimedia, multicultural exploration of the moon. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8. 5/10–5/13. *The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793).*

Photograph by Richard Feldman.



Opening
After the Stürm

Now that the Broadway barrage has ended, successful Off Broadway productions are taking tentative steps back onto the battlefield. 'The Countess,' a well-received period piece about the love triangle between John Ruskin, his wife, and painter John Everett Millais, reopens May 11 at the Lamb's Theatre. And the equally well-reviewed Worth Street revival of Tennessee Williams's dramatic bar crawl 'Small Craft Warnings' (featuring, from left, David Greenspan, Liam Christopher O'Brien, and Cristine McMurdo-Wallis) reopens May 8 at the Tribeca Playhouse. (See "Off Broadway.")

Enter the Guardsman—Weissberg Theater Group (*Side Man*) presents a new musical romance that debuted in London and garnered an Olivier Award nomination for Best Musical. Book and direction by Scott Wentworth, music by Craig Bohmler, and lyrics by Marion Adler. $39.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 2 and 7. In previews for a 5/18 opening. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (212-353-0303).*

Hansen's Cab—Mark R. Giesser's new play follows the plight of a woman diagnosed with Hansen's Disease, or leprosy, in 1958. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 3, some Suns. at 3. In previews for a 5/9 opening. *Jose Quintero Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).*

The Laramie Project—In November 1998, one month after Matthew Shepard's murder, director Moisés Kaufman (*Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*) traveled with his company to Laramie, Wyo., just as Shepard's death was becoming a catalyst for hate-crime legislation nationwide. Six visits and several hundred interviews later, Kaufman and members of his company will present a set of sampled monologues about the town and the murder. $25–$55. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 5/18 opening. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-307-4100).*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Lucrece—Edward Berkeley directs a new production of Thornton Wilder's play based on the rape of Lucrece. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 5/12 for a 5/15 opening. *Ohio Theater, 66 Wooster St. (212-886-1889).*

A Midsummer Night's Dream/The Family Reunion/Don Carlos—The Royal Shakespeare Company presents three works in repertory: Shakespeare's classic, T.S. Eliot's verse drama, and Friedrich Schiller's historical tragedy. Directed by Adrian Noble, Gale Edwards, and Michael Boyd, respectively. $20–$55. Call for schedule. 5/10–5/27. *BAM, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn (718-636-4100).*

Proof—More math onstage! Mary-Louise Parker plays a young woman who faces an elusive mathematical proof, a would-be lover, and Dad, a very sharp mathematician. Directed by Daniel Sullivan (*Moon for the Misbegotten*). $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. In previews for a 5/23 opening. *MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).*

The Rivals/Macbeth—Director Nicholas Martin, who now has *Time of the Cuckoo* and *Fully Committed* running Off Broadway, completes his hat trick with this new production of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's 1775 comedy. / Anne Justine D'Zmura directs Shakespeare. $25–$35. Call for schedule. Through 5/13. *Playhouse @ St. Clements, 423 W. 46th St. (212-279-4200).*

Song of Songs—A new musical based on Sholom Alecheim's love story. Score by Michael Friedman. Written and directed by Daniel Goldstein. $12–$15. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 5/9 opening. Through 5/20. *Greenwich St. Theatre, 547 Greenwich St. (212-592-4005).*

Thunder Knocking on the Door—The anticipated new blues musical with music and lyrics by Anderson Edwards and two-time Grammy winner Keb' Mo'. The production won the 1999 Helen Hayes award for best musical and features Pamela Isaacs (*The Life*), who received the Hayes award for best actress. Book and direction by Keith Glover. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Previews begin 5/12 for a 6/11 opening. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane (212-307-4100).*

Tricycle—Carson Coulon's new play. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 5/11 opening. *Thirteenth St. Theatre, 136 E. 13th St. (212-307-4100).*

Two-Headed—A frontier tale about women in Utah featuring Lizbeth Mackay and Deirdre O'Connell. Directed by Joan Vail Thorne (*Exact Center of the Universe*). $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 5/11 opening. *Women's Project Theatre, 424 W. 55th St. (212-239-6200).*

Wake Up and Smell the Coffee—The latest one-man wonder by Eric Bogosian (*subUrbia, Pounding Nails in the Floor With My Forehead*). $29.50–$49.50. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Fri. at 11, Sat. at 7 and 10. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (212-239-6200).*

When They Speak of Rita—The Foote family presents a new drama by Daisy Foote, starring Hallie Foote and directed by Pulitzer- and Oscar-winning writer Horton Foote. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 5/17 opening. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (212-333-4052).*

Now Playing

Abie's Island Rose—The Jewish Rep presents a new musical comedy about a young Jewish medical student and a Caribbean nurse. Music and direction by Doug Katsaros, lyrics by Richard Engquist and Frank Evans, book by Ron Sproat. $35–$45. Tues.–Thurs. and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-831-2000).*

American Buffalo—William H. Macy and Philip Baker Hall, two prodigiously talented actors who started out in the theater and achieved major Hollywood success, play bumbling thieves in David Mamet's 1975 play. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 5/21. *Atlantic Theater, 336 W. 20th St. (212-239-6200).*

Blind Alley—Three one-acts about young women by Nancy Neverez. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 6:30. *Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-354-1293).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Wildly inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $45–$55. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).*

The Bomb-itty of Errors—A hilarious, funky-fresh "add-rap-tation" of the Bard's classic. $20–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).*

Cobb—Lee Blessing's play about the life of controversial baseball legend Ty Cobb. $25–$35. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2. Through 5/20. *Melting Pot Theatre, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-279-4200).*

The Countess—Gregory Murphy's costume drama about the love triangle of John Ruskin, his wife, and painter John Everett Millais. $40–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. *Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (212-997-1780).*

De La Guarda—A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Perfect for theatrical thrill-seekers who don't mind breaking a sweat. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dinner With Friends—Karen and Gabe, international food writers, are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman.

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) $30–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).*

The Director—In Nancy Hasty's new play, a once-famous director has fallen from grace and is working as a janitor, until a young playwright enlists his skills—theatrical, that is, not custodial. Starring John Shea, last seen opposite Molly Ringwald in *How I Learned to Drive.* $37.50–$40. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. *Arclight Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. (212-279-4200).*

The Donkey Show—A loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* with even looser morals. $35. Thurs.–Sat. at 8 and 10:30, Sun. at 8. *El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).*

Enough About Me: An Unauthorized Autobiography—Downtown diva Varla Jean Merman, who may or may not be the love child of Ernest Borgnine and Ethel Merman, reveals all the aorta-bursting heartache that festers behind her dazzling persona. $30. Thurs., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. *Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (212-307-4100).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).*

Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up Its Act—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. Now featuring the disco hit "Stayin' Awake." $45–$47.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-239-6200).*

Fully Committed—For the price of an entrée, Becky Mode serves up all the splendors and miseries of restaurant life prepared to a fare-thee-well. Smartly directed by Nicholas Martin, and exuberantly enacted by Mark Setlock, this play is a day in the life of Sam, the young man and struggling actor who works the reservation phones in a four-star restaurant where table 31 seems to be the ne plus ultra of socio-gastronomic achievement. (Simon: 1/17/00.) $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Jitney—This is the revised version of August Wilson's first play, the start of what became a ten-part series, still in progress, about African-American lives, one play per decade. Here the seventies are viewed through the goings-on in the office of a gypsy-cab company in the Pittsburgh of 1977. It is so vividly written, acted, and directed (by Marion McClinton, a Wilson specialist) that it keeps you steadily amused, concerned, and moved. All performers are flawless. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $51. Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 7, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Second Stage Theatre, 307 W. 43rd St. (212-246-4422).*

Kiki & Herb: Playing for Time—The downtown duo open their first open-ended Off Broadway run, after practically reinventing cabaret theater with renditions of crooner classics and slightly less Algonquin tunes by the likes of Patti Smith, Suicidal Tendencies, and Christina Aguilera. $12–$15. Fri.–Sun. at 7:30. *Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

Manchild in the Promised Land—Joseph Edward performs nineteen characters in this one-man adaptation of Claude Brown's classic autobiography about life in fifties Harlem. $15–$35. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 5/21. *American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).*

Murdered by the Mob—Interactive off-line entertainment with a three-course dinner, door prizes, death, dancing, and acting awards for best audience participation. $55. Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 7. *Arno Ristorante, 141 W. 38th (1-800-687-3374).*

Naked Boys Singing—Just like a musical revue, but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed.–Fri., and Sun. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. *Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-463-0060).*

Our Lady of Sligo—Sinéad Cusack plays the lead in Sebastian Barry's drama about the destructive relationship of an Irish couple. $30–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).*

Our Sinatra—Kurt Stamm directs this tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes. $50–$80. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Blue Angel Theatre, 323 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Over the River and Through the Woods—A comedy by Joe DiPietro about meddling grandparents. $49.50. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Perfect Crime—The long-running thriller. $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (212-695-3401).*

Runt—A family-friendly musical from the Netherlands complete with 28 dog-size puppets. $10–$25. Call for schedule. Through 5/21. *New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, it pokes fun at every aspect of travel. (Simon: 12/15/97.) $20–$55; optional dinner 90 minutes before curtain. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened 10/30/97. *Ibis Theatre, 327 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Small Craft Warnings—Worth Street Theater revives last year's successful production of the Tennessee Williams drama. $15–$40. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 5. *Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St. (212-532-8887).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie Black's Vegas Room, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and, with more than 4,000 performances, it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88 *(212-239-6200).*

Uncle Vanya —The Roundabout presents Chekhov's comedy, starring vets Sir Derek Jacobi, Laura Linney, Brian Murray, and Roger Rees. $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 6/11. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).*

The Vagina Monologues—Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc., returns for a second coming. What was once Ensler's one-woman show is now performed by trios of actresses. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

The Waverly Gallery—Grande dame Eileen Heckert plays a Village art dealer who is forced to give up her gallery because of her age, in a new play by Kenny Lonergan, author of *This Is Our Youth* and the recent Sundance hit *You Can Count on Me.* $40–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).*

What You Get and What You Expect—Christopher Ashley (*The Country Club, Currently of Palm Beach*) directs Jean-Marie Besset's play about two architects vying for the world's first extraterrestrial commission: a monument on the moon. $45. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-460-5475).*

The Wild Duck—Henrik Ibsen's 1884 tragi-comedy is the fifth production in the Century Center's "Ibsen Series." $12. Wed.–Sat. at 8. *Century Center Ballroom Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. (212-982-6782).*

Yard Gal—*See Simon, p. 72.* $35. Mon. at 7, Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 5/21. *MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-727-7765).*

Off-Off Broadway

Charlie Victor Romeo (Cockpit Voice Recorder)—A multimedia piece about death and high altitudes. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. Through 5/27. *Collective Unconscious, 145 Ludlow St. (212-254-5277).*

Goin' Sane—Emmy Gay's one-woman show of spoken word and comedy. $15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. Through 5/13. *Five Myles, 558 St. John's Place, Brooklyn (718-783-4438).*

Hypatia—A new play by two-time Obie-winner Mac Wellman. $12–$15. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30. 5/10–6/3. *SoHo Rep, 46 Walker St. (212-334-0962).*

Marathon 2000—Ensemble Studio Theatre's one-act festival. $15 for single tickets, $40 for marathon passes. Call for schedule. Through 6/11. *E.S.T., 549 W. 52nd St. (212-247-4982).*

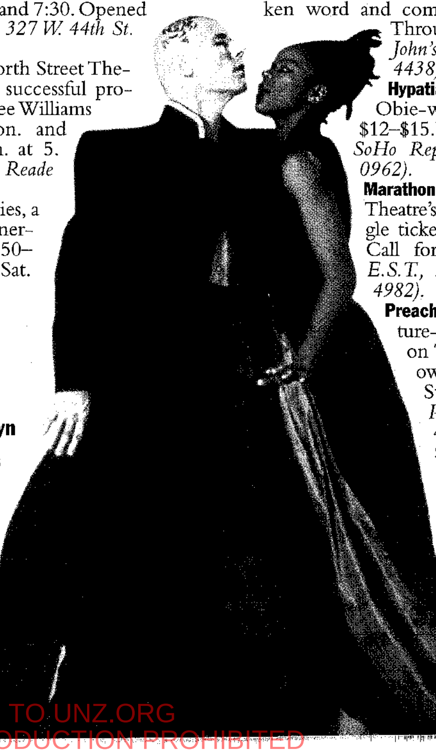
Preaching to the Perverted—Culture-war vet Holly Hughes dishes on Teletubbies and lays out her own gay agenda. $20. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 5/21. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288).*

Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery—Playwright Shay Youngblood's play tells the story of a young black girl who grows up in the sixties South. $12. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 5/28. *Vital Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-592-0129).*

Opening

Brit Fit

A block away from the now-defunct Just for Feet in Fort Greene, the Brooklyn Academy of Music will present the Royal Shakespeare Company productions of Friedrich Schiller's historical tragedy *Don Carlos* (featuring Nicholas Jones and Josette Simon, pictured), T. S. Eliot's verse drama *The Family Reunion,* and Michael Boyd's new production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—which should warm up BAM for Ralph Fiennes's arrival in the Almeida Theatre's September productions of *Richard II* and *Coriolanus.* Opening May 10. (See "Off Broadway.")



Photograph by Donald Cooper.

art

Glass Artists...Walton Ford...Bing Wright

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Frederic Edwin Church—A retrospective of paintings, drawings, and sketches by the nineteenth-century American landscape painter; through 7/15. Berry-Hill, 11 E. 70th St. (212-744-2300).

Willem de Kooning—Paintings and drawings of abstracted female figures from the John and Kimiko Powers collection; through 6/30. Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (212-744-2313).

Piero Dorazio—Abstract paintings from the fifties; through 5/31. Moeller, 167 E. 73rd St. (212-988-4500).

Sam Francis—Abstract paintings made between 1964 and 1968 whose compositions are characterized by open, off-white centers bordered by bright color; through 6/30. Gray, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-472-8787).

Leon Golub/Nancy Spero—Drawings from the sixties and seventies by both artists. Through 5/26. Roth Horowitz, 160a E. 70th St. (212-717-9067).

Rebecca John—Watercolors of botanical subjects; through 6/9. Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (212-838-0333).

Vik Muniz—New works by the Brazilian-born artist, including the series "Personal Articles," a set of 60 fantasy newspaper articles accompanied by computer-manipulated photographs, each in an edition of six, and small paintings made from memory after snapshots found in family albums; through 6/9. Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. (212-794-4444).

Francis Picabia—Late paintings and works on paper by a pioneer of the Dada movement in Paris; through 6/9. Werner, 4 E. 77th St. (212-988-1623).

Pablo Picasso—Thirty original copper plates for the artist's series of etchings illustrating Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; through 5/26. Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. (212-879-0500).

Fred Sandback—New work in colored yarn, the artist's signature medium for the past 30 years, and recent bas-reliefs of single or multipaneled pieces of painted or unpainted wood; through 6/17. Markey, 42 E. 76th St. (212-517-9892).

Lorraine Shemesh—Realist paintings of swimming figures; through 6/9. Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (212-987-4997).

Andy Warhol—The artist's iconic silkscreen paintings of Jackie Kennedy, Liz Taylor, and Marilyn Monroe; through 6/3. C&M Arts, 45 E. 78th St. (212-861-0020).

57th Street Area

Alexander Archipenko—Terra-cotta sculptures made between 1935 and 1948; through 6/2. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-1223).

Luis Cruz Azaceta—New abstract paintings from the series "Structuring Fear" by this artist known for his expressionistic figurative images addressing such issues as exile, homelessness, and urban violence; through 6/17. Barquet, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-9090).

Theresa Bernstein—Paintings and works on paper of landscapes, interiors, and other subjects dating from 1909 to 1980 by one of the youngest members of the Ashcan school, who recently turned 110; through 6/10. Whalen, 24 W. 57th St. (212-397-9700).

Alice Dalton Brown—Recent paintings of landscapes and interiors; through 5/26. Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (212-759-2345).

Andy Goldsworthy—Two new site-specific works, including a wall made of clay and a "rush line" drawing composed of reeds woven together; through 7/17. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (212-315-0470).

Hans Hofmann—Paintings and drawings made by the artist in his summer studio in Provincetown between 1935 and 1966; through 6/10. Ameringer Howard, 41 E. 57th St. (212-935-1110).

Agnes Martin—Recent large-scale abstract paintings based on aspects of love; through 6/10. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (212-421-3292).

Fairfield Porter—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper by the American artist and art critic known for his landscapes of Maine and Southampton, Long Island, and portrayals of his family and friends, including examples of his personal correspondence and articles for magazines; through 5/27. AXA, 787 Seventh Ave., at 51st St. (212-554-4818), Mon.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 12–5.

Jeanne Silverthorne—New cast-rubber paintings, two tableaux, and a series of fourteen tiny photographic prints; through 6/3. McKee, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-688-5951).

John Torreano—New works; through 6/9. Littlejohn Contemporary, 41 E. 57th St. (212-980-2323).

Neil Welliver—Prints from the early eighties to the present, among them the artist's large-scale *ukiyo-e* woodcuts of the Maine woods; through 6/9. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-262-5050).

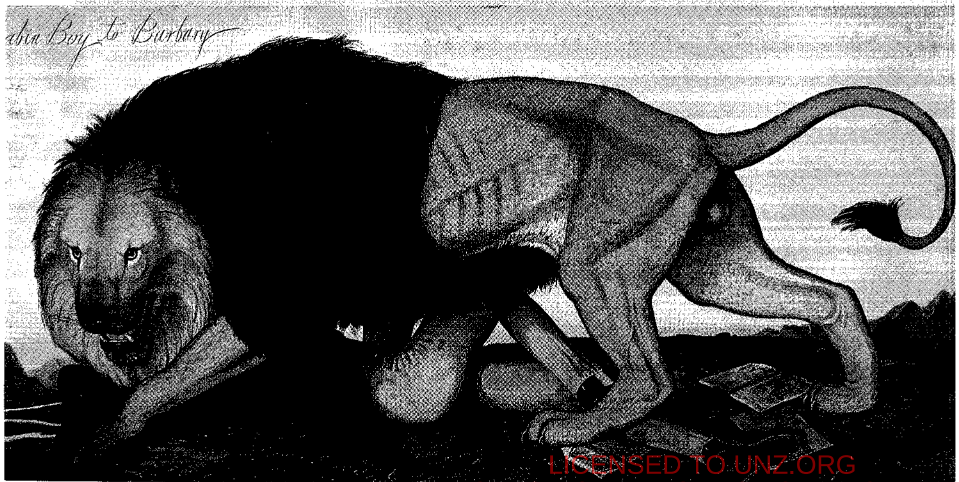
John Wilde—Recent paintings and silverpoint drawings, many of which revisit surreal narratives from the artist's war drawings from the forties; through 6/2. Schmidt-Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-1122).

Talent

King of the Beasts

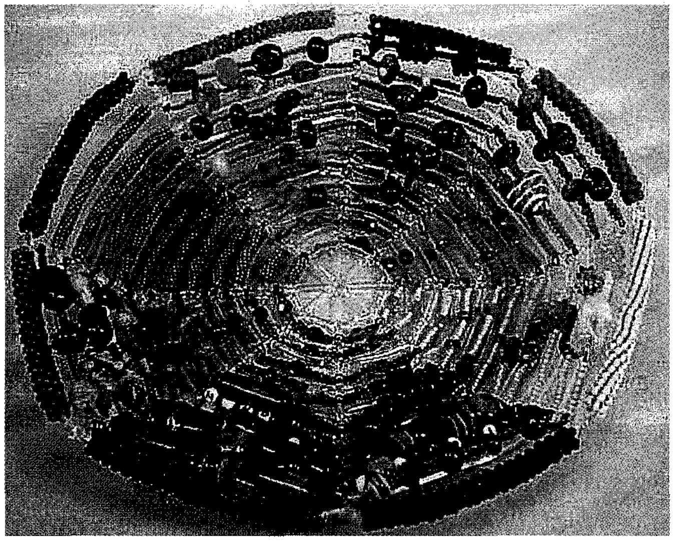
If you thought that Walton Ford simply painted animals in fanciful scenarios, you've entirely missed the point of his meticulously rendered Audubon-on-hallucinogens narratives. Not only does the 40-year-old painter research his subjects' histories and habits, he imagines their thoughts. "If you look at his face, you can see that he's beginning to realize what he's done," the artist says of his Barbary lion, shown mauling a man—Eugène Delacroix, according to Ford (the painter actually died in Paris)—in *A Cabin Boy to Barbary,* one of several recent watercolors he'll exhibit in his new show at the Paul Kasmin Gallery (293 Tenth Avenue, near 27th Street; May 18 through June 30). As with all of Ford's protagonists, the Barbary lion is not just any lion—he is the shaggy North African type deployed by the Romans to make short work of Christians in the Coliseum; was a favorite subject of Delacroix, George Stubbs, and other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century painters; and was eventually killed off by the French in the nineteenth century. He is also, in Ford's eyes, a metaphor for the current state of world affairs. "He'd been preying on people and domestic animals for years, and the French were, like, *Enough already, get him out of here.* He was definitely not willing to join the global economy—he wouldn't just stand still and have his picture painted and strike a romantic pose." But while politics are a common theme in Ford's work—"I use animals as a stand-in for human behavior"—he's not always rooting for the little guy. Instead, he takes a naturalist's dispassionate view. "If you want a culture that produces artists like Delacroix, you can't also have Barbary lions roaming around," he says. "Who's to say what's more important—a lion or a painting by Delacroix?"

Edith Newhall



Photograph courtesy of Paul Kasmin Gallery.

On View *A nothing-less-than-inspired collaboration between downtown Brooklyn's UrbanGlass and the Brooklyn Museum of Art, "Glass Works: Emerging Artists" presents pieces by thirteen Brooklyn-based glass artists alongside objects in the museum's collection from which they took their inspiration (below, Anna Butler's rainbow-hued interpretation of a Native American girl's coiled puberty basket). At the Brooklyn Museum of Art, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; through September 3.*



Photograph courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Bo Bartlett—New figurative paintings and works on paper that explore water as a theme; through 6/3. P.P.O.W., 476 Broome St. (212-941-8642).

Beatrice Caracciolo—Abstract works on paper mounted to board; through 6/3. Cowles, 74 Grand St. (212-925-3500).

Squeak Carnwath—New paintings; through 6/3. Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (212-219-2863).

Bonnie Collura—Works on paper and amalgamated sculptures of plaster, foam, paper, putty, and paint; through 5/26. Lehmann, Maupin, 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Kurt Kauper/Roland Brener—New paintings from the artist's "Diva Fiction" series/A sculpture installation by the Canadian artist and teacher. Through 6/3. Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. (212-343-7300).

Mark Miloff—Thickly impastoed abstract paintings and digital movies; through 6/10. Collins, 83 Grand St. (212-226-1861).

Matt Mullican—A survey of the artist's drawings from 1973 to the present; through 6/27. Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (212-925-4338).

Muntadas—A video installation from 1996 and blueprints, through 5/27, at Kent, 67 Prince St. (212-966-4500), and a recent video triptych, through 5/27, at Crosby Street Project Space, 113 Crosby St. (212-925-4484).

Helen O'Leary—Abstract paintings characterized by heavily layered collections of small gestures; through 6/10. Gold, 474 Broadway (212-625-1723).

Richard Purdy/Rafael Ferrer—An installation of wall drawings, computer-generated images, and encaustic paintings/New gouache paintings inspired by Alberto Giacometti's studio. Through 5/31. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (212-966-6676).

David Scher—Paintings, sculpture, and works on paper; through 5/27. Tilton, 49 Greene St. (212-941-1775).

Robert Zandvliet—Monotypes and paintings from the artist's "Varick" series; through 6/10. Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441).

Nola Zirin—New abstract paintings; through 5/30. Kelly, 591 Broadway (212-226-1660).

Chelsea

Bill Barrette—An installation on the history of Sugamo prison in northwest Tokyo and the Tokyo war crimes trials of 1946–48; through 6/17. Van der Donk, 601 W. 26th St. (212-691-5973).

Willie Cole—New sculpture, including a six-foot-high pair of ceramic high-heel shoes and a group of doll-like figures configured from ceramic basins and chrome plumbing parts, and a film projection; through 5/26. Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (212-367-7474).

René Daniëls—Paintings and drawings by the Holland-based artist spanning the late seventies through the eighties, on loan from the René Daniëls Foundation and various European museums; through 6/3. Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (212-206-7100).

E. V. Day—An installation in which the artist has transformed a sequined Stephen Sprouse dress into a ten-foot-tall column of sparkling light; through 6/3. Urbach Architecture, 526 W. 26th St. (212-627-0974).

Jacob El Hanani/David Claerbout—Drawings/A video installation. Through 5/27. Klagsbrun, 526 W. 26th St. (212-243-3335).

Katharina Fritsch—Two large-scale sculptures that continue the German artist's exploration of fairy-tale imagery; through 6/23. Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (212-243-0200).

Paul Georges—A retrospective of the artist's large-scale figurative paintings; through 6/10. Center for Figurative Painting, 115 W. 30th St. (212-868-3452).

Gregory Green—Recent works that address empowerment, including *M.I.T.A.R.B.U.*, a fully restored 1967 VW Westfalia Campmobile reoutfitted with a complete sound and video recording and mixing studio, a VHF television transmission system, a radio transmitter, and Internet accessibility; through 6/3. Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. (212-929-0500).

Craig Kalpakjian/Rackstraw Downes—Computer-generated images of interiors/Recent paintings of interiors, including those of the World Trade Center; 5/11–6/10. Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

Carlos Leon/Stan Smokler—Black abstract paintings that mix gestural and geometric elements/Suspended steel sculptures. Through 5/27. Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (212-229-0044).

Pipilotti Rist—New work; through 5/27. Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. (212-206-9100).

Keith Sonnier—Drawings and sculptures from the past three years; through 6/3. Marlborough Chelsea, 211 W. 19th St. (212-463-8634).

Robert Stackhouse—A sculptural "floor" constructed from 120-year-old Kansas greenhorn limestone post rocks; through 6/10. Johnson, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-924-1688).

Rudolf Stingel—Large wall-mounted pieces of white Styrofoam that are covered with a pattern of footprints made by the artist walking directly on them; through 6/3. Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Gert Verhoeven—Recent work; through 6/2. Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. (212-462-2668).

Andy Warhol—A selection of the artist's "Shadow Paintings" made with diamond dust; through 6/10. Gagosian, 555 W. 24th St. (212-741-1111).

Jason Young—New abstract paintings; through 6/17. Cristinerose, 529 W. 20th St. (212-206-0297).

Mel Ziegler—Drawings that depict whimsical proposals for outdoor projects; through 6/3. Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

John Zinsser—New abstract paintings; through 6/12. Von Lintel & Nusser, 555 W. 25th St. (212-242-0599).

Andrea Zittel/Gillian Carnegie—Soundproof portable living environments that were conceived to liberate their inhabitants from the dictates of externally imposed time/Landscape paintings that convey anxiety through the artist's obsessive handling of paint; through 5/27. Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (212-627-6000).

Other

Charles Cajori—A survey of the artist's figurative drawings from the past 40 years; through 5/20. New York Studio School, 8 W. 8th St. (212-673-6466).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Force—14 E. 73rd St. (212-734-3636). "Philadelphia: A Crossroads for American Art, 1750–2000," including works by Anshutz, Beaux, Birch, Calder, Carles, Demuth, Eakins, Goodman, Neagle, members of the Peale family, others; through 5/26.

Graham—1014 Madison Ave. (212-535-5767). New paintings by Burckhardt, Hindley, White; through 6/10.

Knoedler—19 E. 70th St. (212-794-0550). "The Collector as Patron in the Twentieth Century," post-war and contemporary art from the collections of five prominent living collector-patrons, including Agnes Gund, Marieluise Hessel, Bebe and Crosby Kemper, Mary and Jim Patton, and Bea and Phil Gersh; through 7/31.

57th Street Area

PaineWebber—1285 Ave. of the Americas (212-534-1672, ext. 212). "Painting the Town, Cityscapes From the Museum of the City of New York," works by Audubon, Hassam, Hopkins, Marsh, others; through 6/23.

St. Etienne—24 W. 57th St. (212-245-6734). Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century portraiture in Austria and Germany by Corinth, Gerstl, Jawlensky, Kokoschka, Nolde, Schiele, others; through 6/10.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Art in General—79 Walker St. (212-219-0473). "Friendships in Arcadia: Writers and Artists at Yaddo in the 90s," works by 26 artists chosen by 25 writers, all of whom shared communal experiences at the artist's colony in Saratoga Springs; through 5/20; "On Translation: The Adapter," a collaborative project between Muntadas and the Department for Public Apperances; through 7/8.

Exit Art—548 Broadway (212-966-7745). "Nuevo New York," the non-profit gallery's annual exhibition of works by emerging artists chosen by its directors Jeanette Ingberman and Papo Colo; through 6/10.

Kelly—43 Mercer St. (212-343-2405). "On Language," works in various media that use language, by Gordon, Hamilton, Kosuth, Nauman, Simpson, Wegner, Wool, others; through 6/10.

Kern—558 Broadway (212-965-1706). "The Boys in Bubbles," works by Flood, McCarthy, Pierson; through 6/3.

Sperone Westwater—142 Greene St. (212-431-3685). "Cosmologies," works by Boetti, Fontana, Halley, Laib, Tuttle, Vital; through 6/10.

Chelsea

Audiello—526 W. 26th St. (212-675-9082). "Effects," works that suggest or incorporate special effects, by Ames, Crockett, Espinosa, Gispert, LaVerdiere; through 6/3.

White Box—525 W. 26th St. (212-727-0767).

"Topologies," works by Anastasi, Hirsch, Le Va, Marshall, Romberg, Weiner; through 6/17.

Photography

Robert Bourdeau—Images of abandoned industrial sites taken over the past decade in the "rust belts" of the United States, France, Germany, and Luxembourg; through 6/17. Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-750-7070).

Fred Cray—"Travel Diaries," unique photo-collages that layer images of high art, cartoon figures, and family snapshots; through 6/10. Borden, 560 Broadway (212-431-0166).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (212-860-1777), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution from 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "Nathan Lyons: Riding First Class on the Titanic," the culmination of a 30-year project by Lyons featuring 200 black-and-white sequenced images revealing his unique view of America and its social landscape; through 6/18.

Mikael Levin—Gelatin silver prints that capture street life in the vicinity of 29th Street and Eighth Avenue; through 6/24. Barefoot, 580 Broadway (212-625-8899).

Thom Lussier—Six color portraits shot over the past four years that render their subjects as silhouettes; through 6/30. Morris, 465 W. 23rd St. (212-727-2752).

Nathan Lyons—Early work from the fifties and from the photographer's first monograph, *Notations in Passing* (M.I.T., 1974); through 6/3. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (212-334-0010).

Robert Mapplethorpe—Auto-portrait Polaroids of the seventies; through 6/10. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (212-242-7727).

Vik Muniz—New photographs that investigate how an event materializes through the media; through 6/3. Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-929-2262).

André Naggar—Fresson prints of people and animals in motion; through 6/2. Stevenson, 338 W. 23rd St. (212-352-0070).

Pace/MacGill—32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999). Drawings, prints, photographs, and sculpture from the collection of Dr. Torsten Wiesel, a Nobel Prize–winning neurobiologist; photographs of plants from the early 1900s by Charles Jones; through 6/17.

Thomas Ruff—New photographs of nudes, through 5/27, at Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (212-966-9074), and selected photographs, through 6/24, at Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. (212-517-8677).

Cindy Sherman—Large-scale photographs from 1985 inspired by children's fables; through 7/1. Skarstedt, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-737-2060).

Stephen Shore—Large-scale color photographs of landscapes in Texas, Montana, and Scotland, and a selection of work from his book *American Surfaces* (1972); through 6/3. 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-255-1121).

Bing Wright—Color photographs; through 5/27. Schoormans,A508 W. 26th St. (212-243-3159).

Museums

American Museum of Natural History—"The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter"; through 5/29. . . . "Body Art: Marks of Identity." The history of body art in the U.S., Europe, Africa, New Zealand, and elsewhere, highlighting objects and practices dating back to circa 2000 B.C.; through 8/30. Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Realm of Marvels: Building Collections for the Future." Works from almost every major area of the museum's holdings, representing nearly every culture and almost all of recorded time; through 6/18. . . . "African Masterworks From the Collection of Beatrice Riese." African art collected by the painter Beatrice Riese, who has lived in New York since 1949; through 9/10. . . . "Urban Glass." A collaboration between Urban Glass, the New York Center for Contemporary Glass in downtown Brooklyn, and the Brooklyn Museum of Art, consisting of works by contemporary glass artists that were inspired by objects in the museum's collection; through 9/3. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution—"National Design Triennial: Design Culture Now." Recent works by 83 American designers and design firms; through 8/6. 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (5–9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Robert Irwin: *Excursus: Homage to the Square*"; through 6/18. . . . "Donald Judd *Untitled,* 1976." A piece from 1976 that is considered one of the late artist's seminal works and comprises fifteen plywood boxes; through 6/18. . . . "Thomas Schütte: Part III: *In Medias Res*"; through 6/18. . . . "Time Traced: Rodney Graham and Vera Lutter"; through 6/18. 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center—"The Prinzhorn Collection: Traces Upon the *Wunderblock,* From the University of Heidelberg." Drawings by psychiatric patients that were amassed during the twenties by the psychiatrist and art historian Hans Prinzhorn; through 6/10. . . . "Cyrilla Mozenter: Very well saint." A series of collage drawings that takes its title from the phrase "very well saints" used by Gertrude Stein in her libretto for Virgil Thomson's opera *Four Saints in Three Acts,* and whose sense of play can be likened to Stein's inventive use of language; 5/12–6/10. 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection—"Michelangelo to Picasso: Master Drawings From the Collection of the Albertina, Vienna." Drawings by Chagall, Dürer, Klimt, Pollock, and others on loan from the Graphische Sammlung Albertina (Graphic Art Collection Albertina), one of Europe's greatest repositories of works on paper; through 6/18.1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Rudy Burckhardt and Friends: New York Artists of the 1950s and '60s." Photographic portraits of artists by Burckhardt, who died last year at the age of 85, juxtaposed with works by those artists from the New York University Art Collection, as well as a selection of Burckhardt's films and photographs of New York cityscapes; through 7/15. by100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8, Sat. 11–5: $2.50 suggested donation.

Japan Society—"For the New Century: Japanese Treasures From the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco." Paintings, sculptures, ceramics, and laquerware spanning 3,000 years; through 7/9. 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155), Tues.–Sun. 11–6; $5 suggested contribution.

Jewish Museum—"Paris in New York: French Jewish Artists in Private Collections." Paintings and sculpture by Jewish artists working in Paris from 1907 to 1939, among them Marc Chagall, Sonia Delaunay, Jacques Lipchitz, Amedeo Modigliani, Chaim Soutine, and Max Weber; through 6/25. . . . "Pickles and Pomegranates: Jewish Homes Near and Far." An interactive children's exhibit that evokes life in two late nineteenth-century Jewish households; through 10/30. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"The Art of Japan From the Mary Griggs Burke Collection." Paintings, sculptures, ceramics, and other works dating from the second millennium B.C. to the early nineteenth century; through 6/25. . . . "Painters in Paris: 1895–1950." Paintings by Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Léger, Matisse, Picasso, and other artists who worked in Paris; through 12/31. . . . "Walker Evans." A retrospective of the American photographer (1903–1975) comprising some 175 vintage prints from public and private collections throughout the U.S. and Canada as well as from the photographer's archive, which was acquired by the Metropolitan in 1994; through 5/14. . . . "Perfect Documents: Walker Evans and African Art, 1935." Photographs by Evans depicting the African sculpture exhibited in MOMA's groundbreaking 1935 exhibition; through 9/3. . . . "Northern Drawings of the 15th and 16th Centuries in the Robert Lehman Collection." French, German, and Netherlandish drawings and illuminations; through 5/21. . . . "Tilman Riemenschneider: Master Sculptor of the Late Middle Ages." An international loan exhibition of carved-wood and stone works by the German sculptor (1460–1531); through 5/14. . . . "Art and Oracle: Spirit Voices of Africa." African sculpture and objects dating from the sixteenth to the twentieth century; through 7/30. . . . "The World of Scholars' Rocks: Gardens, Studios, and Paintings." More than 30 scholars' rocks from the collection of the Richard Rosenblum family; through 8/20.... "David Smith on the Roof." A selection of stainless-steel sculptures displayed on the Iris B. Gerald Cantor Roof Garden; 5/15–11/30. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $10 contribution, $5 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $10, $5 seniors and students.

Morgan Library—"Saint-Exupéry's Little Prince." A selection of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's original preparatory drawings for *The Little Prince,* as well as pages from his revised handwritten manuscript; through 8/20. . . . "Acquisition in Focus: Drawings by Rembrandt." Fifteen drawings by Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1606–1669) from the Library's collection; through 5/14. . . . "Sacred Songs: Illuminated Choir Books." Music manuscripts used in the liturgy of the Catholic church during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; through 10/15. 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $7, $5 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio—"Latin American Still Life: Reflections of Time and Place." Paintings, sculptures, and other works depicting still-life by twentieth-century Caribbean, Central American, and South American artists, among them Diego Rivera, Rufino Tamayo, and Wilfredo Lam; through 5/21. . . . "Franco Mondini Ruíz: *Mexic.*" A site-specific installation depicting a romanticized, miniature cityscape of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán, now Mexico City; through 5/21.1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.–Sun. 11–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Museum for African Art—"Hair in African Sculpture and Art." An exhibition exploring the significance of hair in African society through masks and figures, combs, beads, headrests, and an actual Ghanaian barber shop; through 5/28. 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $5, $2.50 students, seniors, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Millennial Dreams: Vision and Prophecy in American Folk Art." An exhibition of visionary objects and paintings by self-taught artists on loan from major public institutions and private collections; through 5/14. Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Making Choices," the second cycle of MoMA2000 exhibitions: "The Marriage of Reason and Squalor." A survey examining opposites as they occur in single works of art; through 9/19. . . . "The Raw and the Cooked." Works by unschooled, outsider, and naive artists; through 9/19. . . . "Useless Science." The efforts of artists who mimic the methods and conventions of artists; through 9/19. . . . "The Dream of Utopia/Utopia of the Dream." Abstract and Surrealist works by Dali,

Ground Rules:

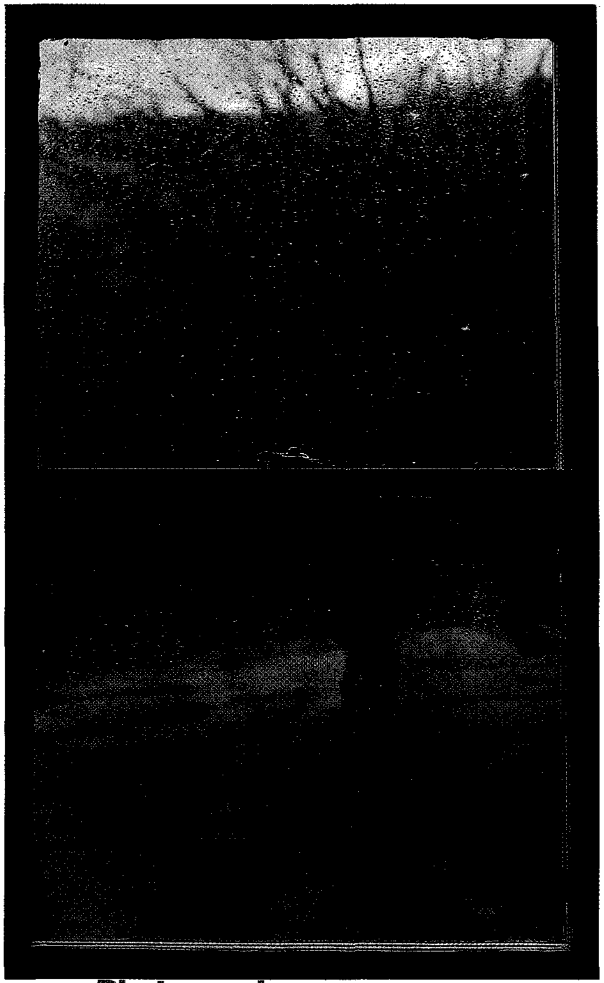
Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Ernst, Malevich, Mondrian, others; through 8/22. . . . "Modern Living 1." Post–World War I designs from the de Stijl, Bauhaus, and Contructivist movements; through 8/22. . . . "Walker Evans & Company." Photographs by Evans and by photographers who influenced him or were influenced by him; through 8/22. . . . "Modern Art Despite Modernism." Works by Albright, Balthus, Cadmus, Feud, Hopper, Rivera, others; through 8/22. . . . "Art Is Arp." Works from the twenties, including wood reliefs, string reliefs, cardboard cutouts, prints, illustrated books, collages, and sculpture; through 8/22. . . . "Giorgio Morandi Etchings." Etchings spanning 1912 to 1949; through 8/22. . . . "War." Works created in response to the threats and effects of mass mobilization and violence; through 8/22. . . . "Graphic-Photographic: The European Revolution in Graphic Design and Photography in the 1920s." Works by Herbert Bayer, El Lissitzky, László Moholy-Nagy, Aleksandr Rodchenko, and others; through 8/22. . . . "Anatomically Incorrect"; through 9/26. . . . "Home Movies"; through 9/26. . . . "How Simple Can You Get?"; through 9/26. . . . "Ideal Motif: Stieglitz, Weston, Adams, and Callahan"; through 9/26. . . . "Modern Living 2" through 9/26. . . . "New York Salon"; through 9/26. . . . "The Observer: Cartier-Bresson After the War" through 9/26. . . . "Paris Salon"; through 9/26. . . . "The Rhetoric of Persuasion"; through 9/26. . . . "Seeing Double"; through 9/26. 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.–Tues., Thurs. 10:30–5:45, Fri. 10:30–8:15 (4:30–8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"Elegant Plate: Three Centuries of Precious Metals in New York City." Objects of silver, gold, and other metals from the museum's collection that were used in or near New York from the early eighteenth century through the twentieth; through 9/24. . . . "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives: 100 Years of Labor in New York City." Photographs and oral histories documenting the lives of New York City's workers over the past century; through 7/16. . . . "New York: Songs of the City." More than 50 pieces of lavishly illustrated sheet music for songs celebrating New York; through 9/10. . . . "The New York Century: World Capital, Home Town, 1900–2000." An exhibition of objects from the museum's collection conceived by the design firm Pentagram; through 7/9. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

National Academy of Design—"The Watercolors of Charles Hawthorne." Watercolors spanning the years 1915 to 1930 by the founder of the Cape Cod School of Art; through 7/30. . . . "Stuart Davis in Gloucester." Approximately 45 paintings and watercolors of Gloucester on Cape Ann in Massachusetts made by the artist between 1915 and 1934; through 7/30. . . . "Art in the Age of Queen Victoria: Treasures From the Royal Academy of Arts." Paintings by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Frank Cowper, Sir Edwin Landseer, Sir John Everett Millais, and others; through 6/4. 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 12-5, Fri. 10-6; $5.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Picturing the Modern Amazon." Images of physically strong women in paintings, drawings, videos, sculptures, photographs, and other media by more than 60 contemporary artists, among them Matthew Barney, Judy Chicago, Nicole Eisenman, Jane Hammond, Mary Ellen Mark, Nancy Spero, and Cindy Sherman; through 7/2. . . . "Tiborocity: Design and Undesign by Tibor Kalman." A retrospective of the late designer's work in print, film, video, and product design, including more than 200 pieces from his personal collection; the archives of M&Co., the design firm he founded in 1979; and his contributions as editor-in-chief of the Benetton-sponsored magazine *Colors*; 5/6–8/7. 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs.–Sat. 12–8 (free Thurs. from 6–8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.



Photography Framed

Leave it to a Seattle native to make the best of a soggy day. By focusing his eight-by-ten view camera on the rain-lashed windows of a Catskills house—and thereby blurring the scenery outdoors—Bing Wright, a New Yorker since 1988, has used the windowpane's inherently minimalist structure to frame vistas that could have been plucked from Impressionist landscape paintings. At Lucas Schoormans, 508 West 26th Street; through May 27.

Photograph courtesy of Lucas Schoormans.

New-York Historical Society—"Stork Club." An exhibition tracing the history of New York's legendary nightclub through letters and business records, photographs, menus, and accessories bearing the nightclub's logo; through 10/1. . . . "Magnum Our Turning World, Photographs 1989–1999." Works by photographers who work or worked for the legendary photo agency; through 6/18. . . . "Jessie Tarbox Beals: On Assignment." Works by America's first female photojournalist; through 7/9. . . . "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America." Photographs documenting lynchings in American from the 1870s through the 1950s; through 7/9. 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center—"Greater New York." The first significant collaboration between P.S.1 and MoMA, an exhibition of works by more than 140 artists who have emerged as vital voices over the past five years; through 5/16. . . . "New works by Rob Pruitt, Ricardo Ribenboim, and Luca Vitone; through 6/18. . . . "P.S.1 Special Projects Program." Site-specific projects by Ethan Crenson, Alix Lambert, and Jyung Mee Park; through 5/28. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Collection in Context." A selection of paintings, photographs, sculpture, and works in other media from the museum's permanent collection; through 5/21. . . . "Images of Harlem: Selected Photographs of James VanDerZee." Images of Harlem in its heyday by the Massachusetts-born photographer who moved to New York in 1906; through 5/21. 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed. and Thurs. 12–6, Fri. 12–8, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Biennial 2000." The museum's biannual survey of contemporary American art, featuring works in all media by 97 artists; through 6/4. . . . "Edward Hopper, Printmaker." More than 50 etchings and drypoints drawn almost entirely from the bequest of the artist's wife, Jo Hopper, which entered the museum in 1970; through 5/28. . . . "What's New: Recent Acquisitions in Photography." Works by Matthew Barney, Nan Goldin, Vik Muniz, Cindy Sherman, and others; through 5/21. . . . "Highlights From the Permanent Collection"; through 6/4. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8 (pay what you wish 6–8 on the first Thurs. of every month); $12.50, $10.50 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Shahzia Sikander: Acts of Balance." The first one-person museum exhibition of the Pakistan-born artist's work, comprising an installation of wall paintings and a mural-sized, three-panel painting that combine Islamic and Hindu artistic traditions with elements of Western art and popular culture; through 7/7. 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. 11–7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000). 5/10 at 10 and 2: "Twentieth Century." On view from 5/6. 5/10 at 10: "Modern Japanese Paintings." On view from 5/6. 5/16 at 7: "Contemporary." On view from 5/13.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730). 5/17 at 10: "Important English and Continental Furniture and Decorations; Old Master Paintings and Drawings." On view from 5/13.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000). 5/10 at 10:15 and 2: "Nineteenth-Century Furniture." On view from 5/10. 5/10 at 7: "Impressionist Part I." On view from 5/7. 5/11 at 10:15 and 2: "Impressionist Part II." On view from 5/7. 5/12 at 10:15 and 2: "Furniture." On view from 5/12.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710). 5/11 at 10:30 and 2:30: "Works of Art on Paper." On view from 5/6.

restaurants

Pan-Asian Invasion...Laight Comer

Manhattan

Lower New York

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—The jewel-toned Financial District branch of the popular Turtle Bay bar and lounge serves the same extensive selection of wine and beer, and a similar menu of appetizer-size plates they call "international tapas." Typically creative selections include a barbecued-buffalo sandwich, shrimp satay with hoisin sauce, and a wild-mushroom quesadilla. *55 Liberty St., second fl. (212-791-WINE). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Gigino Trattoria—The rustic Italian fare in this barnlike TriBeCa trattoria ranges from brick-oven pizza and calzones to salmon with broccoli rabe. The casual atmosphere and fresh, inventive peasant food have already gained a loyal neighborhood following. *323 Greenwich St. (212-431-1112). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Greatest Bar on Earth—This, the most casual component of the Windows on the World complex, has become a popular meeting spot for downtown office workers, curious club kids, and the inevitable tourists. The view, obviously, can't be beat, and the snacky menu includes global bites like fried calamari, barbecued ribs, and sushi. Live music Tuesday through Saturday. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (212-431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (212-219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (212-732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has conquered TriBeCa. It's still virtually impossible to get a reservation, but the intrepid hordes can wait for a table to open up two doors down at Next Door Nobu. *105 Hudson St. (212-219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (212-233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (212-274-8883). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (212-966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Sosa Borella—This full-service TriBeCa café is just as good for an afternoon espresso as for a full meal, not to mention the weekly tango lessons. Sandwiches come nearly two dozen ways; the Italian-Argentinean menu features entrées like Milanese steak and short ribs of beef. *460 Greenwich St. (212-431-5093). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

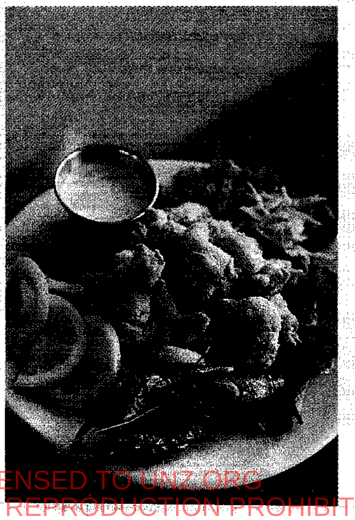
Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (212-941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Wild Blue—In an intimate room that's warm and plushly comfortable but doesn't try to compete with the famous view, chef Michael Lomonaco's menu is solid, superlative American, with a touch of the steakhouse. Exceedingly moist chicken gets a Med-rim treatment with olives and preserved lemons, and buttermilk fried oysters with chipotle cream and spoon bread are an inspired take on an American classic. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7107). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef and TV personality Michael Lomonaco supervises the kitchens of this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs with Maytag blue cheese, and lobster potpie with truffle cream, spinach leaves, and a chive biscuit. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Opening
Def Jambalaya

Before he entered the restaurant business, Michael Eberstadt earned a masters degree in public administration and worked in a soup kitchen on Staten Island and a Hartford residence for homeless people with AIDS. Then, in an attempt to reconcile his capitalistic and altruistic aspirations—making money and creating inner-city jobs—he opened Slice of Harlem, a pizza place on West 135th Street. Next came a satellite branch (this time equipped with a custom-made brick oven) in the commercial hub of 125th and Lenox, and this month, he opens Bayou, a Creole restaurant in the space upstairs (below, with staff), which has been designed by architect Richard Lewis, of Balthazar and Vinegar Factory fame. Chef Steve Manning used to work at top-ranked Clancy's in New Orleans and re-creates Big Easy basics like sherry-spiked turtle soup, po' boys, jambalaya, and fried crawfish tails (pictured). And although his new venture replaces a defunct Harlem bar that opened in 1910, Eberstadt has been careful not to tread on local toes. He commissioned Harlem high-school students to shoot black-and-white photographs to adorn the walls, and he's sensitive to neighborhood appetites. "Creole is akin to soul food," he says, "but I'm not competing with Sylvia's yams." (308 Lenox Avenue, near 125th Street; 212-426-3800.)



Photographs by Kenneth Chen.

Below 14th Street, East

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the 6th Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale décor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (212-982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Knickerbocker Bar and Grill—A subdued steakhouse with vintage items on the walls—Hirschfelds, copies of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and nineteenth-century curios. A sophisticated combination of gastronomics and history. *33 University Pl., at E. 9th St. (212-228-8490). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—One of the earliest pioneers on the East Village dining scene, this comfortable Mexican cantina is especially welcoming in warm weather, when the garden is a serene urban oasis. The grilled-vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (212-254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Telephone Bar & Grill—This East Village fixture was serving classic pub grub like shepherd's pie and fish and chips long before anyone thought of British comfort food as trendy. A youngish crowd gathers here for happy hour (Mondays through Fridays, 4 to 7p.m.) and for a typically hearty Irish breakfast on weekends. *149 Second Ave. (212-529-5000). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (212-388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (212-982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (212-982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (212-645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Jekyll & Hyde—Can you guess the theme of this boisterous Village restaurant? Billing itself as a "haunted explorers' club," it offers interactive entertainment, special effects, and—so that famished explorers may keep up their strength—a menu of American fare like grilled tuna steak, pumpkin tortelli in sun-dried-tomato cream sauce, and "voodoo-spiced" Cajun steak. *91 Seventh Ave. S. (212-989-7701). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Le Zoo—A West Village hot spot, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassoulet. *314 W. 11th St. (212-620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Tio Pepe—A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. *168 W. 4th St. (212-242-9338). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place. Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Northern Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. A year-round backyard garden is available for private parties. *69 Macdougal St. (212-673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

West Village Saloon—This bare bones bar-restaurant features a Wednesday night all-you-can-eat baby-back-ribs dinner and live music Thursdays and Fridays. *51 Grove St. (212-924-1443). (I) AE, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot owned by Aureole chef Charlie Palmer, but Josh Capon's food is all very twentieth-century: potato-wrapped cod with citrus glaze, charred sirloin with red-onion marmalade, foie gras parfait with roasted apple chutney. *36 E. 22nd St. (212-228-4399). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

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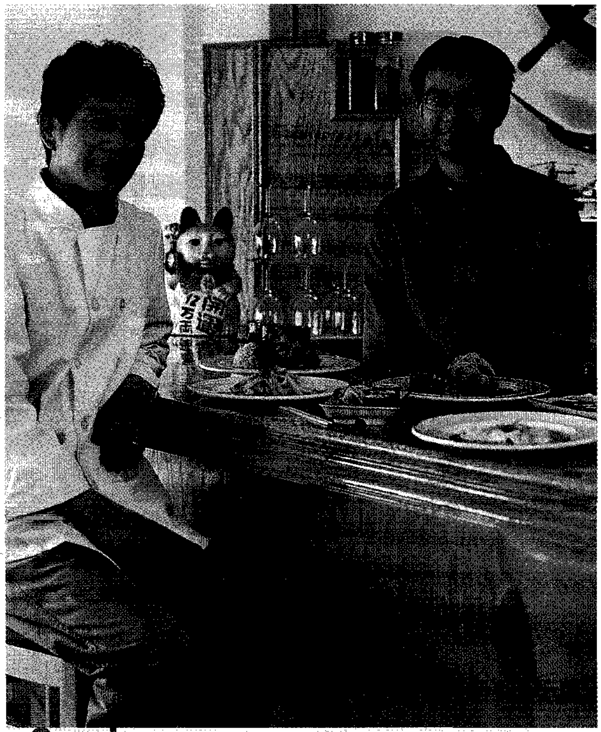


Opening
One Small Happy Family

"I picked the name out of the dictionary," admits Hong Kong native Richard Lam (above right, with his father, Henry), who recently opened the bright, nautically themed JoVial Asian Grill with his parents. His father, the chef, cooked at Cendrillon, which accounts for the Filipino accents interspersed among the Thai, Vietnamese, and Japanese in dishes like spicy seared beef with fried fruit and eggplant salad, grilled short ribs with spicy miso, and black-rice paella with shellfish. Why no Chinese? "Because we don't know how to make it," says Richard jovially. (4 Clinton Street; 212-358-1698.)

Back Porch—An ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. *488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (212-685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. *23 E. 22nd St. (212-228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (212-460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Candela—These vast premises have been decorated with mission-style furniture, iron sconces, and what seems like a thousand votive candles. Chef Joseph Macri's New American menu features signature dishes like the Candela seafood platter, miso-glazed black cod, and Asian barbecued pork chop. The Sunday brunch costs $10.95, prix fixe. *116 E. 16th St. (212-254-1600). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Commodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel—Commuters and business travelers will be glad to know they can enter this formal hotel restaurant directly from Grand Central Terminal, whether for a quick drink in the cigar bar or a full meal of such French-influenced American fare as foie gras French toast, tuna tartare, and ribeye of veal with Swiss chard. *42nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with chipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (212-679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (212-477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (212-481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak-frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (212-679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (212-807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Metro Fish—Hearty fish dinners with all the fixin's in a "nautical townhouse" setting. Live lobsters, crabs, and other fresh seafood platters are simple, satisfying, and reminiscent of the sort of shore dinners served in seaside towns along the Northeast coast. Those with more of a culinary wanderlust can sample the house-special bouillabaisse. *8 E. 36th St. (212-683-6444). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (212-677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (212-490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (212-689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Patria—Zesty Latin American fare brought to you in a festive high-energy atmosphere. The three-story dining room suits the changing mood of diners: bright and airy by day and warm and earthy by night. Try the Mojito, Patria's signature drink made from sugarcane. *250 Park Ave. So., nr. 20th St. (212-777-6211). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Tivoli Bar and Grill—This midtown restaurant aspires to attract a hip, young crowd. Thus, live music on Thursday night, a D.J. on Saturdays, and a menu heavy on seafood like raw shellfish, fish and chips, and lobster ravioli in seafood broth. There's also a happy hour, with all its attendant grub: chicken wings, mozzarella sticks, nachos, and a complimentary appetizer of the day. *515 Third Ave., nr. 34th St. (212-532-3300). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (212-243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Verbena—Diane Forley's seasonal American cuisine is at once delicate and deliciously satisfying; the room, similarly, pulls off the neat trick of feeling luxurious and minimalist at the same time. The menu is whimsically divided into two categories—fruits and vegetables, and fish, birds, and meats—with such appealing entries as butternut squash ravioli with roasted orange sauce, and rack of lamb with Yorkshire pudding. In summer, demand a garden table. *54 Irving Pl. (212-260-5454). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar—This national chain invades Manhattan's freshly scrubbed and reinvented 42nd Street with an eager-to-please, affordable menu heavy on burgers, steak, and fajitas. Out-of-towners will feel right at home. *234 W. 42nd St. (212-391-7414). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Ben's Kosher Delicatessen—This casual delicatessen—the Art Deco–ish Manhattan offshoot of a Long Island chain—brings a full roster of pastrami, corned beef, sour pickles, potato latkes, and other highlights of kosher cooking to the garment district. All baking is done on the premises, and for those who hanker for something a little stronger than Dr. Brown's, there's a full bar. *209 W. 38th St. (212-398-2367). (I) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (212-243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (212-989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Fusion@Ohm—One of the new crop of all-in-one entertainment centers: dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an international fusion menu that features Vietnamese vegetable spring rolls, rigatoni bolognese, and pistachio-crusted chicken breast with morel sauce. *16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Hush—This Flatiron venture is part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate the New American menu, served in shareable portions. *17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Photograph by Carina Salvi.

Le Madri—This Chelsea mainstay has long enjoyed a reputation for informality and flavorful Italian fare. The garden is a wonderful warm-weather spot for a light lunch of salad and pasta or a more substantial repast like osso buco with gremolata or risotto with lemon and zucchini. *168 W. 18th St. (212-727-8022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

World Yacht Dining Cruises—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the "Best of New York" menu: a collaboration with some of the city's biggest culinary talents, featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill's Ed Brown, Aquavit's Marcus Samuelsson, and Montrachet's Remi Lauvand and dessert creations from Payard Pâtisserie, all prepared by World Yacht's executive chef Wayne Tuman. Jacket required. Reserve. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cucina & Co.—This market-style takeout shop and café is ideally situated in the lobby of the MetLife Building to catch the crush of commuters passing through Grand Central. Breakfast pastries, specialty sandwiches, baked pastas, steak-frites, and "Dinners for Two" keep the worker bees fueled throughout the day. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-682-2700). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Della Femina—Jerry Della Femina tapped Kevin Penner, the very talented chef from the adman's Hamptons hot spot, to supervise the stoves at his Manhattan outpost. His city food places the same premium on high-quality ingredients in dishes like day-boat halibut, langoustines with black truffles, and rib-eye steak. Sit at the bar, converse with the very able and accommodating bartender, and try to guess the identity of every A- and B-list celebrity in the collage of caricatures. *131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found, unwinding. The eclectic menu includes smoked-duck-breast bruschetta and chocolate fondue with fruit. *244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). (I) AE, MC, V.*

The Four Seasons—Philip Johnson designed this cathedral of modernity. Picasso did the tapestry. And the place remains a classic 30 years later. The Grill Room is where the term *power lunch* got its start in the seventies. The pool room is where the rest of us go for achingly expensive fare like foie gras and figs and chocolate velvet. *99 E. 52nd St. (212-754-9494). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Genki Sushi—Not your typical sushi bar but a moving conveyor belt with color-coded dishes that indicate the price of your lunch. This midtown branch is the first American outpost of an Asian megachain headquartered in Singapore. The restaurant, whose high-tech design incorporates a wall of exposed sound panels, Lucite chairs and stools, and a Warholian upholstery pattern, also offers bento boxes, vegetarian dishes, sashimi, and a varied sake selection. *9 E. 46th St. (212-983-5018). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Le Perigord—This romantic French restaurant near Sutton Place is famous for its classically prepared, elegantly presented French cuisine. The regular clientele, with a liberal smattering of celebrities and diplomats, is the type that dresses for dinner—a good thing, since jackets are required. Open Sundays. Private rooms available for parties. *405 E. 52nd St. (212-755-6244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

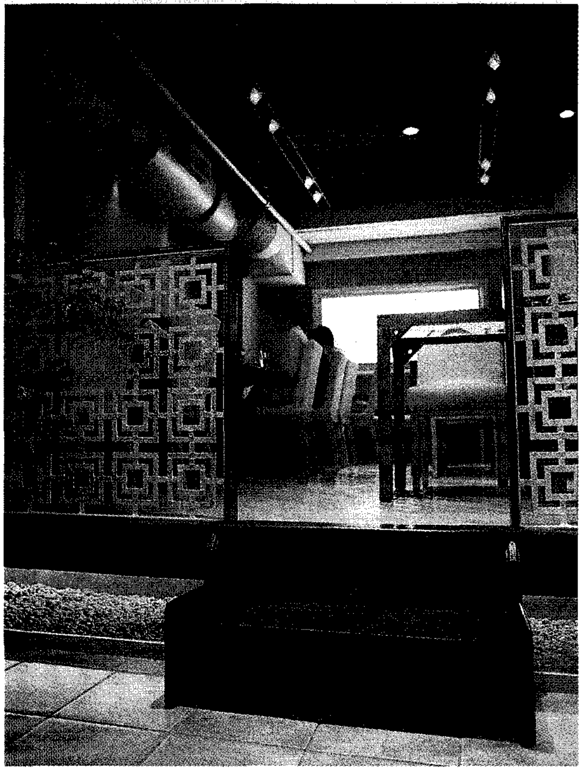
Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Christian Delouvrier's masterful classic French cooking. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Maloney & Porcelli—A midtown steakhouse with something extra, courtesy of consulting chef David Burke's contributions—including something called "angry lobster"—plus whole leg of lamb, an extensive wine list, and an innovative menu of American classics. A second-floor party room has a fireplace and skylights. *37 E. 50th St. (212-750-2233). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Michael Jordan's The Steak House N.Y.C.—It's hard not to feel like a king surveying his kingdom from the balcony of the awesomely renovated Grand Central Terminal. And it's easy, with David Walzog's high-protein menu, to eat like an athlete: Choose from Maine lobster, a 44-ounce double porterhouse for two, barbecued short ribs, pepper-crusted buffalo sirloin, and a superlative New York strip. There's a private dining room and a private smoking room. And if you (or your progeny) so desire, you can mark the occasion with a trip to the souvenir shop, for basketball- or steak-themed paraphernalia like baby rattles and dog bones. *23 Vanderbilt Ave., Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Opening Mi Mi Mi

Is lower Madison Avenue ready for a four-flavor pan-Asian restaurant with a purple-pony-tailed assistant sushi chef? Sook Kang, owner of Mi (which means "beauty" in her native Korean) is betting on it. "People in the neighborhood were looking for a healthy, low-fat alternative," says Kang, who should know—she also owns the coffeeshop next door, Burger at Its Best. So she assembled a team of cooks with impressive-sounding pedigrees (Mercer Kitchen, Hatsuhana) to collaborate on a menu incorporating sushi and sashimi, pad Thai, Malaysian spare ribs, and Korean bibimbop. And not a fatty French fry in the quirkily decorated house. (66 Madison Avenue, near 27th Street; 212-252-8888.)



Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

Monkey Bar—Since its swanky renovation by David Rockwell, this midtown landmark has undergone several chef changes. Andrew Chase has infused the menu and the retro-feeling dining room with new spirit by way of inspired new dishes like coriander-crusted duck breast with Bartlett pears, onion tart with potatoes and bacon, and loin of rabbit with confit and foie gras ravioli. Plus a special cocktail-hour canapé menu, to be enjoyed in the monkey-mural bar with nightly piano music. *60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Oceana—Fish-savant Rick Moonen's extensive and excellent seafood menu make this room, reminiscent of the dining cabin on an elegant ocean liner, a favorite for business lunches and romantic evenings alike. The upstairs bar is a perfect retreat for cocktails and seafood snacks in midtown. *55 E. 54th St. (212-759-5941). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oscar's—This contemporary American brasserie is named for the Waldorf-Astoria's longtime maître d', Oscar Tschirky, creator of such legendary dishes as the Waldorf salad and veal Oscar. The menu leans toward updated classics like yellowfin-tuna tartare and smoked Hudson Valley foie gras with truffled red-wine marmalade. Designer Adam Tihany transported the history-laden dining room into the twenty-first century with a much-needed face-lift. *Lexington Ave. at 50th St. (212-872-4920). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Peacock Alley—Under talented chef Laurent Gras, the Waldorf's posh dining room has broken with mealtime tradition. Rather than offer straightforward appetizers and entrées, Gras divides his menu into categories like ocean/river (lobster soup flavored with chestnuts), field/forest (seaweed and field greens), black truffle (Venetian pasta), and farm (rabbit chop wrapped in pasta). And rather than price each individual dish, he charges by the number of courses one selects: $54 for three, $67 for four, and up. The sommelier's suggested wine pairings are available for an additional price, and jackets are required. *301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (212-872-4895). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (212-753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (212-867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

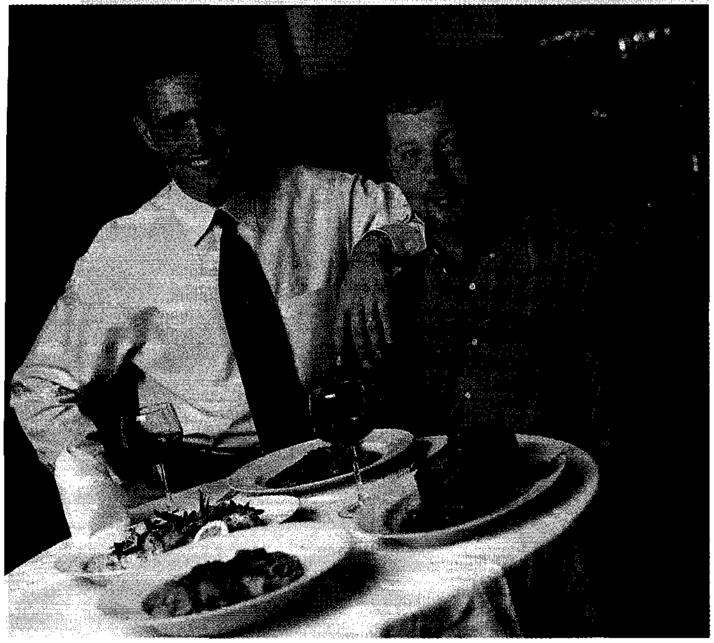
Vong—Wow! This is Thai to die for. Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's little Third Avenue–by–way–of–Bangkok palace was designed by architect David Rockwell, and it's a showy temple indeed—there's gold leaf on those walls. The menu's full of wonders, starting with the crab rolls and coconut-milk-and-galangal soup. *200 E. 54th St. (212-486-9592). (E) AE, CB, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Algonquin—Draws on its history as the fabled stomping ground of literary giants. The wood-paneled sitting-room-like lobby still holds many imaginations captive. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Opening
Frankie Yes

This week, Frank Pellegrino Jr. (below left) opens Baldoria, a duplex Italian restaurant in the theater district that's as close to East Harlem's legendary Rao's as most of us will ever get. Pellegrino's father, Frank Sr., earned the nickname Frankie No after years of politely declining requests for reservations at his microscopic ten-table celebrity hangout. The son offers better odds: 136 seats, plus a raw bar upstairs. He's hired childhood friend Michael Shiell (at right) to complement the signature seafood salad and lemon chicken of Rao's with dishes that clearly transcend its home-style Neapolitan roots: foie gras terrine with black truffles and warm lentils, for one. Baldoria ("festivity" in Italian) further breaks with tradition by accepting reservations and credit cards—a virtual necessity when entrées run upwards of $38, and when there are cookbooks and jarred tomato sauce to be sold. (249 West 49th Street; 212-582-0460.)



Aquavit—An elegant midtown respite for sophisticated Scandinavian food, set in the glass-enclosed atrium of the former Rockefeller mansion. The menu offers delicately flavored Swedish versions of tea-smoked duck, lobster salad, venison, and, of course, gravlax and herring. *13 W. 54th St. (212-307-7311). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking with dinner after 5 P.M. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (212-246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is devoted entirely to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (212-541-7777). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Brasserie Bit—With David Ruggerio supervising the kitchen at this new theater-district restaurant, customers can expect a bit of Italian cooking to seep into the French-American brasserie menu. Pre-or post- curtain appetites are sated with hearty fare like braised short ribs with olive-oil-enriched mashed potatoes, and garlic-roasted pork shank. Want something less heavy-duty? Try the European tapas, served at the serpentine zinc bar. *258 W. 44th St. (212-869-4440). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (212-974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (212-956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Estiatorio Milos—The New York outpost of a Montreal favorite, this stylishly spare Greek restaurant specializes in perfectly fresh seafood, arranged market-style on ice and grilled simply with organic herbs and imported olive oil. The fish selection runs from the familiar—red snapper, pompano—to the more exotic, like loup de mer, Moroccan pageot, and Greek dente. Finish with super-creamy goat's milk yogurt with honey. *125 W. 55th St. (212-245-7400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. *60 W. 55th St. (212-688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a theater-district shrine to the stars of stage and screen. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks and herb-crusted rack of lamb to crab cakes and marinated duck breast. Theatergoers will want to know about the $23.50 prix fixe dinner, and music lovers about the live jazz and blues on Saturday night and the Sunday jazz brunch. *150 W. 47th St. (212-869-5482). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have earned him a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrénées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (212-246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Local—This theater-district American bistro has lots of cozy booths and turns out sophisticated, refreshingly imaginative fare with international accents but doesn't go overboard. Try the pan-seared scallops with Maine crab cake and sweet-corn chowder; the roasted North Atlantic salmon with spring vegetables; and the excellent desserts. *224 W. 47th St. (212-921-2005). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—This place is always buzzing, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (212-265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Sitar Indian Cuisine—This casual restaurant attracts office workers and midtown's ever-growing hordes of tourists, who come for house specialties like ginger chicken, lamb shaslik, onion bhajia, and the always-popular chicken tikka masala. *58 W. 56th St. (212-581-1155). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

St. Andrews—In what might be New York's only full-fledged Scottish restaurant, the bartenders wear kilts, the scotch is single-malt, and the décor consists of wine cabinets, old Scottish Rail posters, and pictures of famous golf courses. The hearty steak-and-seafood menu features dishes like rack of lamb, tenderloin, and brook trout stuffed with crabmeat and Irish oatmeal in a scotch-whiskey sauce. *120 W. 44th St. (212-840-8413). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (212-397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Armani Café—This stylish midtown haven for weary shoppers (and informed eaters) on the sixth floor and rooftop terrace of the clothing store offers wonderfully fresh salads, al dente pastas, delicious

Photograph by Bruce Katz.

sandwiches, and entrée specials like chicken breast with lentils, roasted vegetables, and polenta. *601 Madison Ave., nr. 57th St. (212-715-0500). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn Diner USA—"The Finer Diner" serves a gourmet reworking of the foods of everyone's favorite borough, from fragrant chicken soup with challah to a "fifteen-bite hot dog," with refreshments like Penfolds Cabernet and chocolate malts. *212 W. 57th St. (212-581-8900). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Dawat—You can't miss with tandoori—cooked before your eyes in the big ovens in the back—or with any of the more unusual regional specials. Actress and cookbook author Madhur Jaffrey supervises the very popular and wide-ranging menu. *210 E. 58th St. (212-355-7555). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (212-758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (212-371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

March—This small townhouse feels homey and romantic. Try confit and grilled duck touched with sweet and savory chutneys or Atlantic salmon with Middle Eastern spices and aïoli. *405 E. 58th St. (212-754-6272). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Nirvana—The only Indian restaurant with a superb fifteenth-floor-view of Central Park and a varied menu of Bangladeshi and Pakistani specialties. Sample from a selection of curries, kormas, biryanis, kababs, tandooris, and vegetarian dishes. *30 Central Park So. (212-486-5700). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (212-753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (212-265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Cafe Crocodile—A French Mediterranean bistro with dishes ranging from Provençal to Moroccan in an intimate, romantic townhouse crowded with flowers and oil paintings. Attracts serious foodies from the neighborhood and the occasional gaggle of well-informed Euro-tourists. *354 E. 74th St. (212-249-6619). (M) AE, MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (212-996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge—A seamless fusion of a steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dining room's landscape is speckled with round booths so big and luxurious that they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. *1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (212-249-3600). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Jo Jo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. *160 E. 64th St. (212-223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Mark's—Decked out like a private London club, with plump, tasseled pillows to nestle against. Fine French-American cooking (torchon of foie gras with cranberry-kumquat compote, pan-roasted lobster with Armagnac jus), award-winning wine list, and a Willy Wonka–worthy chocolate tea. *25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (212-879-1864). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (212-644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (212-585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (212-935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sel & Poivre—Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes specialties like steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. *853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (212-877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gabriela's—Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (212-961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

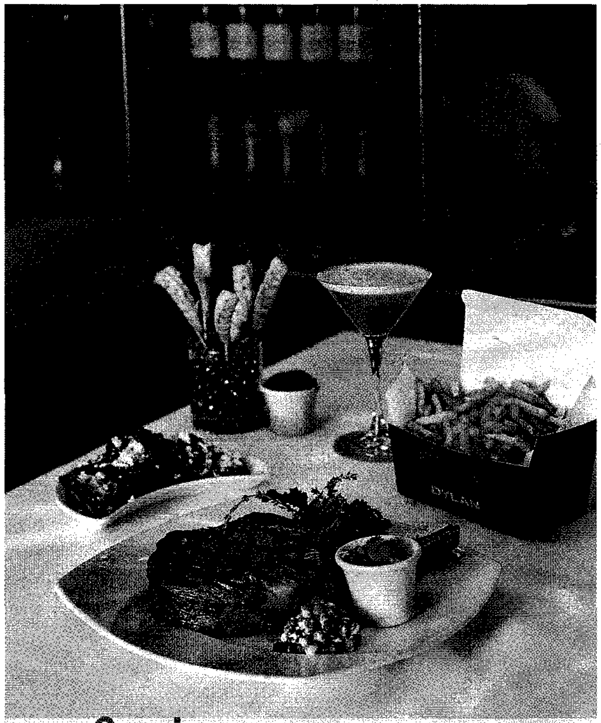
Hi-Life Bar & Grill—Big-city brasserie with retro feel—*and* a completely au courant sushi bar. During the week, the mahogany French doors, an overstuffed banquette, and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steamed dumplings to strawberry sundaes. After dinner every weekend, a D.J. tilts the place toward a party. *477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (212-787-7199). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

La Vela—A comfortable, unpretentious spot for Northern Italian food. Worth sampling are the zuppa di pesce, the risotto, and the wild-mushroom, black-olive, and goat-cheese pasta. *373 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 77th St. (212-877-7818). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers' Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (212-234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (212-864-7326). (I) ($).*

Mormando's Steakhouse—Steak, cigars, and bluepoint oysters with salmon caviar—who could ask for anything more? Well, if you could, there's also a



Opening In Her Prime

After City Wine & Cigar Co. went up in smoke and its subsequent incarnation as a fish house flopped, the restaurant at the corner of Laight and Greenwich Streets reopens this week as Dylan Prime. Floral arrangements, a conspicuous absence of dark wood and brown paint, and steaks in his-or-her portions are intended to make women with dainty appetites (or the ones who feign them) feel welcome. To garnish the usual strip and porterhouse suspects, chef Mina Newman offers sauces like Makers Mark bourbon, black-truffle beurre blanc, and shallot bordelaise at $2 a pop, and $3 "chapeaux"—Maytag blue cheese, shallots, and chives, for instance—to accessorize your chosen cut. (62 Laight Street; 212-334-2274.)

Photograph by Dasha Wright Ewing.

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grilled seafood special (Maine lobster, oysters, and jumbo shrimp), and a dining room with a skylight. *73 W. 71st St. (212-874-3474). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (212-769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (212-724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (212-799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sapphire Indian Cuisine—A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bombay have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columbus Circle, an area in sore need of a tandoori infusion. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and all the currently trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-represented. *1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (212-996-0660). (I) ($).*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Peter Luger—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24–01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

nightlife

Wire...Kid Koala...Clifford Brown Tribute

Concerts

Nine Inch Nails—5/9 at 8. *Madison Square Garden, 34th St. and Seventh Ave. (212-307-7171). $45.*

Small Stages

Arlene Grocery—5/9: Two Tides; Soaked; Holly Palmer. 5/10: Saintface; Noca Social. 5/11: The Universal Chrome. 5/12: USA Wasted; Pi; Neruda. 5/13: Early Edison; Thrill Cycle; Pop Mafia. 5/14: Hopewell; Full Moon Syndrome; Ferdinand the Bull. 5/15: Enis; Tin Shade. 5/16: Andrew Vladeck; Holly Palmer; Lucky Joe. *95 Stanton St. (212-358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—5/8: Mike Stern Band. 5/10: Natalie Macmaster. 5/11: Chip Taylor; Cindy Bullens. 5/12: Ramblin' Jack Elliott; the Freight Hoppers *15 W. 4th St. (212-228-7880).*

Bowery Ballroom—5/8: Kid Koala. 5/9: Fab Faux. 5/10: The Jayhawks. 5/12: Vic Chesnutt & Kristin Hersh. 5/13: Kittie. *6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—5/12–5/13: Pinetop Perkins. *73 Eighth Ave. (212-924-9755). $.*

Fez—Sundays: Jackie Beat, "I Didn't Mean to Turn You On." Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays: Kiki & Herb, "Playing for Time." 5/8: Rhett Miller; Lizzie West. 5/9: Yaddo 75th Anniversary Celebration. 5/10: John Doe. 5/15: ASCAP's "Quiet on the Set." *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

Hogs & Heifers Honky Tonk North—All shows begin at 10 and admission is free. 5/9: Doug McCollum; Dirtball. 5/10: Andy Aledort & the Groove Kings. 5/11: Miss Babs B'Day Bash. 5/12: Bill Kirchen. 5/13: Lex Grey. 5/16: The Camaros. *843 First Ave., bet. 95th and 96th Sts. (212-722-8635).*

Irving Plaza—5/9: Beenie Man. 5/10: Train. 5/11: Mickey Hart Band. 5/12: Travis. 5/13: Deep Banana Blackout. 5/15: Wire. *17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).*

Joe's Pub—An intimate space that boasts the most eclectic booking in town. Expect everything from torch singers to underground hip-hoppers to New Age composers. Mondays: Downtown revue "Damaged Liver Musical." Tuesdays: "Original Roses" with D.J. Beverly Bond. Wednesdays: "Reggae Night." Thursdays: Editors, scene-makers, and boldface names take their turns spinning their favorite records with the "Personality D.J. Series." Saturdays: Left-field, non–Hot 97–variety hip-hop with "Indie 5000." Sundays: The deep-house oriented "Love Bazaar" with D.J. MKL. 5/8: IYO. 5/10: Carmelita Tropicana. 5/11: Eszter Balint. 5/12–5/13: Soul Erotica. 5/14: Antony and the Johnsons. *425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).*

Knitting Factory—5/8: Azalia Snail; Illyah Kurahkin; Backworld. 5/9: Pure & Red; Victoria Hana; Hasidic New Wave. 5/10: Alpha Yaya Diallo; Juan-Carlos Formell; Laurel MacDonald. 5/11: Cat Power; Michael Hurley. 5/12: Louie Belogenis/Roy Campbell Quartet. 5/13: Tony Levin; Larry Fast; Jerry Marotta; Jesse Gress. 5/14: Karan Casey. 5/15: Thrones; Pig Destroyer. *74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $.*

Makor—5/9: Songwriters Hall of Fame, hosted by Dina Fanai, Bob Leone, and April Anderson; Three Dimensional Singing Workshop with Ann Dyer. 5/10: Ann Dyer Trio. 5/11: Ehud Banai. 5/13: Chris Washburne and the SYOTOS Band. 5/14: Doug Womble Trio; Makor Open Stage; Jewish Music Jam. *35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000).*

Manitoba's—Mondays: Beat Rodeo. Saturdays: Adam Roth. Sundays: Anna. Tuesdays: "Hardcore" with hosts Misstress Formika and Candis Cayne. 5/10: Truck. 5/11: Jonnie Chan and the New Dynasty Six. 5/12: The Demolition String Band. 5/13: Adam Roth. 5/14: The Gowanus Canal Boys. *99 Ave. B (212-982-2511).*

Maxwell's—5/9: The Jazz Butcher Conspiracy. 5/10: Sally Taylor; Brian Kelly. 5/11: John Doe; Mike Errico. 5/12: The Jayhawks. 5/13: American Standard; Demonspeed. 5/14: Rudy Ray Moore. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).*

Mercury Lounge—5/8: Enemy Mine; Pan-American. 5/10: Mary Timony; Mendoza Line. 5/11: The Jazz Butcher Conspiracy; Aeuk. 5/12: Jesse Dayton & the Road Kings; Manix; Extra Virgin. 5/14: Chandler Travis. 5/15: Nina Hines; Sergeant Garcia; Speed Racer; Velour. *217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).*

Rodeo Bar—5/8: Mount Pilot. 5/9: City Grass. 5/10: L'il Mo. 5/11: Dave Foley. 5/12: The Niagras. 5/13: "Rockabilly Saturday Night." 5/14: The Mollys. 5/15: Western Caravan. *375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-683-6500)*

S.O.B.'s—Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 5/7: Jurassic 5. 5/9: Jazzhole. 5/10: Boca Livre. 5/11: Gil Scott-Heron. 5/14: "Mother's Day Bossa Nova Brunch." *204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).*

Wetlands—Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illuminati. Thursdays: Groove Collective. 5/8: Pharaohe Monch; Shabaam Sahdeeq. 5/9: The Toni Brown Band. 5/10: Seventh House; the Push Stars. 5/11: Big Daddy Kane; Prince Paul. 5/12: Schleigho; the Slip. 5/13: Roz Nash Quartet; Soulive. *161 Hudson St. (212-386-3600). $.*

Performance

High Wire Act

Wire inspired punk's sonic amphetamine rush with lightning-quick songs like "Field Day for the Sundays" and its annoy-at-all-costs attitude with droning tunes like "I Am the Fly." But lead singer Colin Newman maintains, "Wire was never a punk band," even though early U.S. hardcore bands like Minor Threat covered classics like "12XU." "We had no abiding interest in punk—it was extremely limited." Never mind the bollocks indeed. Still, Wire's layered textures of noise owe as much to Brian Eno's soundscapes as to Johnny Rotten's yowl, and their stretched-out, improvisatory style, which incorporated bits of everything from synth-pop to free jazz, made the band a massive influence on artier groups ranging from Sonic Youth to Stereolab. "Punk, and our band, are about creating art with limited means and having the attitude of 'Okay, this is not about the quickest way to make a buck or make a big audience happy,' " says Newman. "Our influence extends far beyond rock bands. I meet people from many artistic disciplines who tell me how important Wire was to them." It's that enduring legacy (as well as an invitation to play London's Royal Festival Hall last year) that inspired the band to get together for a reunion tour, their first in over a decade and their first time working together since the early nineties. Nevertheless, Newman stresses that the tour, which stops at Irving Plaza on May 15, "is *not* a revival show. It won't be like 'Let's get together and relive those great punk-rock days of the seventies!' "

ETHAN BROWN

Performance
Choice Cuts

Most turntablists show off their mixing skills with the deadly seriousness of prog-rockers, but Kid Koala (a.k.a. Eric San, pictured) leavens his sample collages with absurdist humor. Which is not to say the 25-year-old is short on virtuosity: His latest album, *Carpal Tunnel Syndrome,* is full of warp-speed scratches and cuts, which should be on prominent display when Koala plays the Bowery Ballroom on May 8. (See "Small Stages.")

Clubland

Baby Jupiter—5/8: Silith Fair; Crash Positions. 5/9: Clark Gayton's Epicenter; Chris Barron. 5/10: House of Red; Mad Juana. 5/11: Clifford Lane; Swampadelica. 5/12: Les Sans Culottes; Mike Mok. 5/13: Basehead; True Mystic Sound System. 5/14: Akim Funk Buddha's Dha Fusion. 5/15: Silith Fair; Zinc. *170 Orchard St. (780-0287).*

Centro-Fly—The club formerly known as Tramp's is now a hot spot to groove to D.J.'s. The owners have managed to snag the house/trip-hop/big-beat promoters "Plant" for their Saturday nights and the "Subliminal Sessions" with D.J. Erick Morillo (and plenty of D.J. royalty like Armand van Helden and "Little" Louie Vega as their special guests) for their Thursdays. The last Saturday of every month, Plant presents D.J.'s Junior Sanchez and Roger Sanchez (no relation), two of New York house music's finest. Sundays: Dressed-up hip-hop with "VIP Sundays," featuring D.J. Max Glazer and Jessica Rosenblum. *45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).*

Cheetah—This Chelsea/Flatiron-district nightspot scored a clubland hat trick with "Twelve West," "Legends," and "Underground Network." But now that "Underground Network" is defunct and "Legends" has decamped to a newer club called True, the future is looking a little less bright for the club. Tuesdays: "Twelve West," D.J. Nicky Siano's wildly fun, campy after-work party where Chelsea boys, fierce voguers, and men in Superman costumes (!) get their groove on for an early-week romp that rivals the ecstatic energy of "Body & Soul." Thursdays: "Clique," where the socialite set grooves to the hip-hop beats of fellow uppercruster D.J. Samantha Ronson. Fridays: "GBH," an acronym for Great British House. *12 W. 21st St. (212-206-7770).*

Don Hill's—South and west enough to scare away the rabble, this inconspicuous bar hosts rockers, club kids, and vinyl gourmets—all of whom groove to some of the best D.J.'s in the city. Wednesdays: "Rock Candy" with D.J. and host Steven Blush. Thursdays: "BeavHer," a long-running eighties night; Fridays: Drag queens and gay rock-'n'-rollers get down at "Squeezebox." Saturdays: British-rock-themed "Tiswas." Sundays: D.J. Johnny Sender spins an eclectic mix of soul, funk, rock, R&B, salsa, and house at "Loose." *511 Greenwich St. (212-219-2850). $.*

Frank's Lounge—A bare-bones bar and dance spot, which hosts Lorie and E-Man's great house-music party "Bang The Party" every Friday. *660 Fulton St. at S. Elliott St., Fort Greene, Brooklyn (212-726-1322).*

Fun—Saturdays: A great house-music party called "School," with resident D.J.'s Melvin Moore and Neil Aline (of "BPM" and "Rendez-Vous") and producer Matthias Heilbronn. *130 Madison St., under the Manhattan Bridge (212-964-0303). $5.*

Halcyon—Yet another excellent unpretentious outer-borough nightspot with an eclectically minded lineup of house, drum 'n' bass, and electronica. Fridays: The drum-'n'-bass-oriented "Acupuncture." Saturdays: Deep, soulful house with "Hah.Nah." Sundays: "Chill Factor" with D.J. Chillfreeze. *227 Smith St., bet. Butler and Douglass Sts., Brooklyn (718-260-WAXY).*

The Roxy—The cavernous Chelsea institution's deeply entertaining and mysteriously underattended Tuesday- and Wednesday-night roller-skating jam keeps boogie queens' wheels spinning till the wee hours. Fridays: "Big Fridays" offer big fun for the weekender straight crowd. Saturdays: Superstar D.J. Victor Calderone spins house for the Chelsea boys while hard-bodied go-go boys dance on the bar. *515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.*

Shine—Once an important spot for up-and-coming rock and dance acts, this downtown spot is now host to excellent, enthusiastically received D.J.-oriented nights like "Giant Step Mondays" and the Friday-night hip-hop-meets-beautiful people affair "Hello 2000." *285 W. Broadway (212-941-0900).*

Twilo—Twilo is *the* superclub of the moment, thanks to a revolving lineup of dance music's biggest marquee attractions. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard house and techno with "2K Wednesdays." Fridays: World-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, and Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and on-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. Junior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy following. 5/10: Timo Mass; Lee Burridge. 5/12: Paul Van Dyk. *530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).*

Vinyl—Stripped of its liquor license, this once-hedonistic downtown space is now a dance-music purist's paradise and quite possibly the best club in the city. Wednesdays: "Little" Louie Vega spins at the relaxed, low-key (for now), dance-friendly (check out the break-dancers in the back of the room) house party "Dance Ritual." Fridays: Hard, trippy house (affectionately nicknamed "K-hole house" by its aficionados) from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which at about seven in the morning becomes the city's most adventurous party as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. *6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).*

Jazz

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays: The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays: The Famous Duke Ellington Orchestra directed by Paul Ellington. 5/11–5/13: "Mobley's Message": The Music of Hank Mobley. *315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a great sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 5/9–5/14: McCoy Tyner Big Band. *131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).*

Cajun—A brassy and brightly lit bit of New Orleans in Chelsea, dedicated to Preservation Hall–style Dixieland. Regulars include Joe Muranyi, clarinetist for the last six years of Louis Armstrong's All Stars; Eddy Davis, a jazz banjoist; and Chuck Folds, a stride pianist and sometime accompanist to trumpet legend Doc Cheatham. *129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (212-691-6174).*

City Hall—Mondays in the Granite Room: The Charles Mingus Orchestra. $15 cover, $10 for students. *131 Duane St. (212-227-7777).*

Detour—With no cover and top-notch young players, this Village joint packs 'em in every night of the week. Sundays: Mike Magilligan. 5/8: Luis Paroa Trio. 5/9: Kerry Politzer Quartet. 5/10: Tom Beckham Quartet. 5/11: Mike Fahn Quintet. 5/12: Dave Pietro Quintet. 5/13: Brooklyn Boogaloo Blowout. 5/15: Matt Kane Quartet. *349 E. 13th St. (212-533-6212).*

"Highlights in Jazz" Presents: "We Remember Clifford Brown"—5/11 at 8. With Max Roach; Lew Soloff; Helen Merrill; Teddy Edwards. *The Pace Downtown Theater, 3 Spruce St. (212-346-1715). $20, $17.50 for students.*

Iridium—In the surreal basement across from Lincoln center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30 Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 5/9–5/14: Jon Lucien. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, jazz greats, and artists on the rise. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7 , guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10; Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight; and Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 5/9–5/14:

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = *cash only.*

Andrew Hill Sextet. *116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).*

Red Blazer—Mondays: Red Blazer Jazz. Tuesdays: A Tribute to Judy Garland starring Tira. Wednesdays: Alan Russell and His Big Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Band featuring David Belt. Fridays: Sam Mulano and the Bourbon Street Swingers. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell Quintet featuring Sol Yaged. *32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. *183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 5/9–5/14: Yosuke Yamashita New York Trio. *88 Seventh Ave. So. (212-242-1785).*

Tonic—Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. 5/10: "An Evening of New York Premieres" with Gary Smith; Tony Bevan; Michael Welch. 5/11: Bob Musso; Tin Hat Trio. 5/12: John Butcher; Joelle Leandre. 5/13: William Parker Quartet. 5/14: Jenifer Jackson; Driver Quartet. *107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. 5/9–5/14: Houston Person. *178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037). $.*

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Shows Tues.–Thurs. at 9:30; Fri.–Sat. at 8,10, and midnight. *82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).*

Bruce Vilanch in "Almost Famous"—Opens 5/11. *The Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-307-7100). $35–$40.*

Carolines on Broadway—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. $12.50–$24.50; two-drink minimum. 5/9: "The Blue Collar Show." 5/10: Rich Vos; Judy Gold. 5/11: Bass Ale's "Laugh Your Bass Off." 5/11–5/14: T. P. Hearn. 5/14: "Julie Halston's New York." *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. Through 5/14: Colin Quinn; Greg Giraldo; Marc Maron; Greer Barnes; Nick Dipaolo; Jim Norton; Lisa Lampanelli; Godfry. *117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat. ($20 for 10:30 Sat. show), $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).*

Gotham—A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun.: New Talent Showcase. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights; two-drink minimum. 5/12–5/13: Marc Maron; Judy Gold; Jim Gaffigan; Orny Adams. *34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his Letterman appearances. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15 A.M. $12 cover. 5/12–5/13: Buddy Bolton; Lisa Lampanelli; Sue Costello. *236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Fresh from a major overhaul, the Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.) Sun.: The Howard Fishman Quartet. Through 5/13: Iris Williams. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).*

Arci's Place—A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intimate cabaret space. Sun. at 8: Lisa Asher and Jeff Waxman. Mon. at 8: Steven Lutvak. Through 6/3: Kaye Ballard. *450 Park Ave. So., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. Late dining. *13 E. 12th St. (212-741-9105).*

Cafe Carlyle—Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. $60. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).*

Cafe Pierre—Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis celebrates her fourteenth year at the Cafe Pierre with a special program called "Fascinating Rhythms: 50 Years of American Popular Song and Jazz." Sun.–Mon., Nancy Winston sings and plays piano. $19 minimum; jacket and tie required. *Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (212-940-8195).*

The Carnegie Club at Carnegie Bar and Books—Fri. and Sat. at 9:30 and 11: Sinatra impersonator Cary Hoffman, backed by Stan Rubin's eleven-piece big band. $20 cover; two-drink minimum. *156 W. 56th St. (212-957-9676).*

Danny's Skylight Room—$20; $15 minimum. 5/10 at 9:15: Jaymie Meyer. *346 W. 46th St. (212-265-8130).*

Don't Tell Mama—What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than some understated cabaret? 5/13: Steven Brinberg's "Simply Barbra 2000." *343 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). $.*

Feinstein's at the Regency—Michael Feinstein's cabaret space at the Regency Hotel shares the room with the restaurant 540 Park. Tickets are $60; $50 food-and-drink minimum. *540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 212-339-4095).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 9; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11. $30 cover; $20 minimum. Through 6/3: Steve Ross in "Love & Laughter: Part One." *365 W. 46th St. (212-586-0244).*

Judy's—This cozy and friendly piano bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. 5/9: Renee Smith. 5/10: Go Mahan. 5/11: Elizabeth Hodes. 5/12: Stephanie Cheek; Go Mahan. 5/13: Anthony Santelmo Jr.; Deian McBryde. 5/14: Yvonne Sherwell; Leonard McKenzie. 5/15: Stephanie Long. *169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (212-929-5410).*

Performance

Brown's Bash

Clifford Brown's warm, melodic trumpet playing earned him comparisons to Miles Davis and Dizzy Gillespie, but tragically was killed in a car accident when he was just 25 years old. On May 11 at the Pace Downtown Theater, the producers of the consistently excellent "Highlights in Jazz" series will present "We Remember Clifford Brown," a tribute concert starring a stellar cast of jazz luminaries including Max Roach (pictured) and Lew Soloff. (See "Jazz.")

Photograph by David Redfern/Retna.

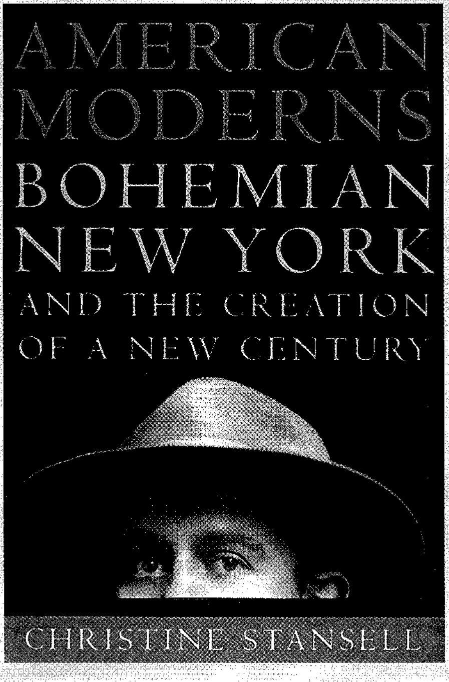
the mix

Chuck Close...Mother's Day Plant Sale

In Print

Bohemian Rhapsody

Christine Stansell's *American Moderns* recounts the experience of the intellectuals who fled World War I Europe for New York and created a literature exalting their new home as the epicenter of creativity, possibility, and excitement. Which raises an almost unbelievable point: There was actually a time before New York was the epicenter of creativity, possibility, and excitement. "We think of it as a truism that we should feel this way about New York," Stansell says, "but before them there wasn't any literature of seduction. There was about Paris, and to an extent London, but not New York, which was seen as gray and endless." By the time writers and editors like Walter Lippman, Emma Goldman, and Max Eastman were done crafting the mythology of bohemian New York, it was ready to persuade generations to come that this city is A No. 1, top of the heap. "This problem of outsiders in the city particularly interested me because I came to New York in the seventies as an outsider, but felt immediately at home," Stansell says. She was drawn to these writers then, when she was about the same age as her subjects. "They came to seem a little callow to me as I got older," she admits. After all, the premise that Manhattan is the only place in which it's worth being alive is as illogical as it is alluring. "I moved to Princeton in 1982," says Stansell, a professor there. "It's given me some distance to see the New York tradition of self-aggrandizement. It simply couldn't be that 6 million people get to live life in color while everyone else has to get by with black-and-white." Of course, no New Yorker ever truly manages to dispel that brainwash. "I still feel the constant pull of that tremendously powerful and delicious imagery that suggests: Somewhere in the city at this minute, life is being lived to its fullest." Stansell will confront the city and its sirens again at the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, 232 E. 11th St. (212-475-9585), where she'll read on May 18 at 6 P.M. ARIEL LEVY


AMERICAN MODERNS
BOHEMIAN NEW YORK
AND THE CREATION OF A NEW CENTURY
CHRISTINE STANSELL

John Leonard's TV Notes

Return of the Czar (5/9; 10 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13), a collaboration of *Frontline* and National Public Radio, is a devastating critique of the American policies that gave Boris Yeltsin a blank check to proceed with "market reforms" at the expense of Russian democracy, leading to economic collapse, social anarchy, corruption so pervasive as to amount to looting, and the ascendancy of the KGB's very own Vladimir Putin, just in time to destroy Chechnya. Such democrats as Yegor Yakovlev, the former editor of *Moscow News,* and Sergei Kovalev, who survived the Gulag to become commissioner of human rights until his resignation over Chechnya, are in a disarray as deep as their depression. And it will only get worse.

Molokai: The Story of Father Damien (5/13; 8 to 10 P.M.; Starz!) enlists a remarkable supporting cast (Peter O'Toole, Sam Neill, Derek Jacobi, Kris Kristofferson, Leo McKern, Alice Krige, Tom Wilkinson) and stunning locations (the Hawaiian islands of Oahu and Molokai) to tell the true story of the priest (David Wenham as Damien) and the princess (Kate Ceberano as Liliukalani) who team up to bring hope to a leper colony in spite the of displeasure and indifference of his church and her state. An exploration of the mystery of goodness.

Rated X (5/13; 9 to 11 P.M.; Showtime) is a scabrous excuse for Charlie Sheen and Emilio Estevez, the real-life acting brothers who seemed to enjoy themselves as garbagemen in *Men at Work* (1990), to impersonate Artie and Jim Mitchell, the equally real-life porn filmmakers who gave us Marilyn Chambers in *Behind the Green Door* (1972), before one of these cokeheads blew away the other and did time for it. The inspiration appears to have been *Boogie Nights,* although the only thing funny about *Rated X* are Jim's delusions of art. Directed by Emilio, with Charlie doing his crazy act, and both of them as bald as creepy hubcaps as if in solidarity with the bare flesh of which there is lots and lots and lots and lots, and then some more.

Jesus (5/14 and 5/17; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS), from the folks who set up shop in Morocco to bring us the TNT cable Bible series on Moses, Abraham, David, Samson and Delilah, and Solomon, is a straightforward and respectful rendition of the Christ story, with more than the usual glancing reference to the Jewish radicalism of the time that made all the centers of power nervous, plus a stark way with such scenes as the beheading of John the Baptist. Jeremy Sisto is fine as Jesus, especially chasing out the money-changers, although in confiding parables he sometimes sounds too much like the kindly facilitator at a touchy-feely group-grope in a hot tub. As Mother Mary, Jacqueline Bisset seems to be rehearsing for all those Renaissance paintings. As Mary Magdalene, Debra Messing is rather a stretch, but so was Susan Hayward as Bathsheba back in 1951. As Pontius Pilate, Gary Oldman could very well be under contract at a think tank dreaming up counterinsurgency scenarios. My favorite passage is the temptation in the desert, with pop-tart Manuela Ruggeri morphing from a Scarlet Woman into Satan himself, Jeroen Krabbé, a sort of Weimar gangster with prior knowledge of inquisitions.

Radio Highlights

"Riding the AIDS Roller Coaster"—5/9 at 7:30 P.M.: John Rudolph explores the epidemic in New York through interviews with doctors, patients, scientists, *POZ* magazine publisher Sean Strub, and pharmaceutical pioneer Dr. David Ho. WNYC AM 820/FM 93.9.

Lectures and Panels

Chuck Close—5/9 at 6 P.M.: The portraitist discusses some of his paintings at the Frick, 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); free.

"Visual Pollution, Information Pollution"—5/11 at 6:30 P.M.: Wendy Brawer, Jamer Hunt, Sheila Levrant, Ellen Lupton, and moderator Tucker Viemeister discuss environmental issues confronting the design industry, as part of "The Ethics of Managing Excess" series at the Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. between 50th and 51st Sts. (212-753-1722); $7 for guests and nonmembers, on a first-come-first-served basis.

"Alternatives to Prison"—5/9 at 7:30 P.M.: The Libertarian Book Club's Anarchist Forum presents prisoner-support activist Rebecca Pates, discussing alternatives to imprisonment for dealing with abusive individuals. Brecht Forum, 122 West 27th St., 10th fl. (212-979-8353); contribution is requested.

Avraham Rabby—5/10 at 7:30 P.M.: The advisor to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations offers the second lecture in the series "United Nations' speakers on Children, Poverty, Third-World Debt, and Women" at Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 East 88th St. (212-289-4100); free.

"Artists' Visions: Andy Goldsworthy Talks With Robert Storr"—5/11 at 8:15 P.M.: A slide presentation and commentary on the artist's work, followed by an interview and audience Q&A session. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $20.

Women in the Workplace—5/11 at 8 P.M.: Muriel Siebert, Carol Jenkins, and Sheila Wellington consider women's professional status and the ways in which women achieve success in the working world. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $20.

The Written Word

Daniel Asa Rose—5/9 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading and book-signing by the *Madison* travel editor's book *Hiding Places* at Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Binnie Kirshenbaum and David Liss—5/10 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from *Pure Poetry* and *A Conspiracy of Paper*, respectively. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

Suzanne Matson—5/10 at 7:30 P.M.: Book signing and reading from her debut novel, *A Trick of Nature*, Barnes & Noble, 267 7th Avenue, Brooklyn (718-832-9066); free.

Edvard Radzinsky—5/11 at 7 P.M.: Reading from his newest historical novel, *The Rasputin File*, at Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (212-595-6859); free.

Barrow Street Music Series—5/11 at 7:30 P.M.: Doug Goetsch, Martha Zweig, Stephen Burt, and Sharon Kraus reading at the Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. (212-777-7343); free.

Elizabeth Macklin—5/11 at 7 P.M.: Reading from *American Daughter*. Three Lives & Company, 154 W. 10th St. (212-741-2069); free.

Marjorie Welish—5/11 at 6:30 P.M.: A reading and interview with the author, hosted by *LIT* magazine, at 66 West 12th St., Rm. 510 (212-229-5488); free.

"A Tribute to Rob Bingham"—5/12 at 7 P.M.: Thomas Beller, Clara Bingham, Gerry Howard, and other friends will read from *Lightning on the Sun* at the Whitney Museum of Modern Art, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-782-9796); suggested admission is $10 for adults, $8 for students/seniors.

Citywide Storytelling Festival—5/12 at 9 A.M.: Sponsored by the Board of Education of the City of New York, at the Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (718-935-4000); free.

Constance Rosenblum—5/13 at 2 P.M.: Book signing and discussion of her book *Gold Digger: The Outrageous Life and Times of Peggy Hopkins Joyce* at the New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park West; free with museum admission of $5 for adults, $3 for students and seniors.

Judith Taylor and Karen Swenson—5/14 at 3 P.M.: Reading from their books *Curios* and *A Daughter's Latitude: New & Selected Poems*, respectively, at Posman Books, 1 University Pl. (212-533-2665); free.

Amanda Foreman—5/15 at 7 P.M.: Reading from her New York *Times* best-selling biography *Georgiana: Duchess of Devonshire* at Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (212-595-6859); free.

Francis Wheen—5/15 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from *Karl Marx: A Life*. Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Place (212-420-1322); free.

Tours

"Queens Jazz Trail"—5/13 at 10 A.M.: A tour half-driven, half-walked to destinations like the homes of Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, and Lena Horne in Addisleigh Park, concluding with a soul-food luncheon at the Blue Goose Cafe and a live jazz concert. Meet at Queens Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard, at Linden Place (718-463-7700 ext. 222); $75 adults, $65 seniors, $60 students under 21. Advance reservations required.

Little Italy History & Tasting Tour—5/13 at noon: A tasting tour of the community's ethnic specialties, focusing on the history of the neighborhood and the immigrants who lived there (212-485-3331 for reservations and meeting place); $15 (includes food).

"Mother's Day in Central Park"—5/13 and 5/14 at 2:30 P.M.: Discover the park's hidden places and early history with stops at Strawberry Fields, Literary Walk, the Arsenal, and Bethesda Fountain (212-465-3331 for reservations and meeting place); $12.

Happening
Society Pages

Fran Lebowitz, who just can't get over how amusing the rich and flashy are, will be happily surrounded by her subjects when she reads from her novel-in-progress 'Exterior Signs of Wealth' at snotty Serena's on May 10 at 6:30 P.M. Call the Museum of the City of New York at 212-534-1672, ext. 257, for information and reservations.

Benefits

"Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund Awards"—5/8 at 6 P.M.: Honoring Kimberly Peirce, director of *Boys Don't Cry*, Tim Gill, founder and chairman of Quark, Inc. and President of the Gill Foundation, Richard Burns, Esq., executive director, New York Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center. Hosted by Kate Clinton. Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (212-477-9656); $300.

"Do Something Wine Tasting"—5/10 at 6:30 P.M.: Private tasting hour with Andrew Shue and a raffle to benefit the national nonprofit youth-leadership organization. Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway, 2nd fl. (212-523-1190); $50, $75 for private tasting hour, advance tickets only.

Free Arts for Abused Children Photography Benefit—5/10, 7 P.M.; Featuring cocktails, a D.J., and a silent auction of works from notable photographers, to benefit abused, neglected, and at-risk children and their families. Whitespace Studios, 523 West 37th St., bet. 10th and 11th Aves. (212-974-9092); $75.

New Works Benefit—5/14 at 7 P.M: Champagne reception and performances by Mikhail Baryshnikov, Dave Douglas, Laurie Anderson, and Steve Paxton to benefit the Tricia Brown Dance Company at the Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. Also included is a post-performance dinner at the Mathew Marks Gallery at 523 W. 24th St. (212-582-0040 for information and ticket purchase); $75–$1,000.

GAME WEEK

HOME ▨ AWAY ░

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
METS		PIT FSNY 7:05 P.M.	PIT FSNY 7:05 P.M.	PIT FSNY 7:05 P.M.	FLA FSNY 7:10 P.M.	FLA WPIX 1:10 P.M.	FLA FSNY 1:10 P.M.
YANKEES	TAM MSG 7:05 P.M.	TAM MSG 7:05 P.M.	TAM MSG 1:05 P.M.		DET MSG 7:05 P.M.	DET FOX 1:05 P.M.	DET FOX 1:05 P.M.
METROSTARS						KC MSG 8:30 P.M.	
	5/8	5/9	5/10	5/11	5/12	5/13	5/14

Events

Mother's Day Plant Sale—5/12-5/14; 10 A.M.-6 P.M.; This annual sale at the Botanical Garden's Twombly Plant Shop features photos from the Perennial Garden, new and unusual tropicals, hard-to-find perennials, colorful baskets, and a wide range of culinary, medicinal, and ornamental herbs. At the New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., Bronx (718-817-8700); free.

The International Fine Art Fair—5/12–5/17, 11 A.M.-8 P.M., except Sundays, 11 A.M.-7 P.M. Featuring important vintage artwork from the Renaissance to modern masters, a loan exhibition, and five galleries making their first ever appearance. The Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 67th St. (212-642-8572); $15 includes free catalog.

Exhibitions

"Magnum, Our Turning World: Photographs 1989-1999"—Through 6/18: A photographic overview based on the book *magnum degrees* of photojournalism since the fall of the Berlin Wall, with new work from founding member Henri Cartier-Bres-

Photograph by Albert Watson.

Solutions to last week's puzzles

	C	A	S	T	E	R		D	E	P	I	C	T	
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A	D	D	R	E	S	S		N	O	R	E	S	T			A	L	G	E	R

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Cramer *continued from page 34*

professionals, always in awe of John Meriwether and his band of merry mathematicians, refused to touch.

And earlier this year, the demise of Tiger, the giant hedge fund run by Julian Robertson, caused a fantastically buyable dip in the Dow's Old Economy stocks. The amateurs lapped it up even as the professionals cowered in fear, the way they do whenever one of their own goes under.

Why do the professionals always panic? One reason may be their mistaken faith in valuation methodologies that always place one foot out the door whenever the going gets tough. Unlike the amateurs who genuinely believe in the long-term value of stocks, these professionals always talk about the equity markets as if they were chain letters, pyramid schemes, houses of cards. This lack of faith makes them vulnerable to any particular piece of data that seems to be out of character with the low-inflation, high-growth environment that has pretty much characterized this economy for the past ten years.

A second reason is that the pools of money the professionals run are now way too outsized for their own good or the good of their investors. When the pros panic, we all get splashed, if not drenched, by their selling. They create their own personal crashes.

Finally, the pros constantly misjudge the core competence of the retail investor. Faced with a plethora of stinko investments like gold or real estate or a low-interest-rate CD, indie investors will always park their money in various stock-market instruments, from high-growth to index funds. And they will continue to do so *until they need the money back*. That, and not an errant consumer-price-index number, a malignant purchasing manager's report, or a bad quarterly earnings report from a famous tech company, will shake these optimistic investors' faith in their beloved stocks.

Until then, the public will happily buy every dip the professionals give them until they take every last penny away from those who were supposed to know better. ■

James J. Cramer is manager of a hedge fund and cofounder of TheStreet.com. At time of publication, his fund had positions in JDS Uniphase, Qualcomm, and Veritas. His fund often buys and sells securities that are the subject of his columns, both before and after the columns are published, and the positions that his fund takes may change at any time. Under no circumstances does the information in this column represent a recommendation to buy or sell stocks. Cramer's writings provide insights into the dynamics of money management and are not a solicitation for transactions. While he cannot provide investment advice or recommendations, he invites comments at jjcletters@thestreet.com.

On Air ***Secrets of the Dead*** **(May 15, 8 to 10 P.M.; May 16, 8 to 9 P.M.; May 17, 8 to 10 P.M.; Channel 13) is the week's oddest portmanteau of paranoias. Bookending two perfectly reasonable hours of semi-scientific speculation—why a colony of Vikings vanished from the Greenland coast, whether hydrogen gas got a bad rap when the *Hindenburg* went down in flames—are programs that would have us believe a heretofore unknown asteroid smacked us in the Immanuel Velikovsky on or about A.D. 535, causing Dark Ages in Europe, dead Aztecs in Teotihuacán, and the birth of Islam; and that the Anasazi Indians who inexplicably disappeared from Chaco Canyon in A.D. 1200 were bloodthirsty cannibals. So obsessive is anthropologist Christy Turner on this second subject, going on about decapitation and "roasting," that you'd think *they did this to mother*. Surely this belonged on Fox instead of public television.**

son. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St.(212-873-3400); suggested donation $3-$5.

"Stork Club"—Through 10/1: An exhibition abou the notorious nighttime rendezvous, includin memorabilia, photographs, an installation tha mimics the original floor plan of the club, and a exploration of the career of the club's famou owner. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W 77th St., at Central Park West (212-873-3400) $5 for adults, $3 for students and seniors, free t children.

Sports

Thursday Evening Roll—5/11 at 6:45 P.M.: The Empir Skate Club's weekly in-line skate around the car-free loop of Central Park starts at Columbus Circle finishing around 8:30 P.M. Relaxed pace; suitable fo anyone who can blade without assistance. There's post-skate hang for food and swill at McHale's, 46t St. and Eighth Ave. Contact the Empire Skate Clu of New York at 212-774-1774, or visit www.empireskate.org for more information.

***Women's Sports & Fitness* Half-Marathon and 5K**—5/1 at 8 A.M.: The New York Road Runners Club host two Mother's Day races for women only. Both star in Central Park on East Drive at 70th St., finishin at 67th St. and West Drive. Numbers and T-shirt may be picked up prior to the race 5/11–5/1 from noon to 7 P.M. or 5/13 from 11:30 A.M. t 4:30 P.M. at New Balance New York, 821 Thir Ave., bet. 50th and 51st Sts., or from 6:30 to 7:3 A.M. race day at the registration tent on West Driv and 67th St. Nonmembers $17; limited race-da entries $22. Call 212-860-4455 or visit www.nyrrc.org for more information.

Photograph courtesy of Channel 4

in concert

ABT at the Met...Vladimir Feltsman

Classical Music

Sylvia McNair and Jennifer Welsh, Sopranos, and the Met Orchestra—Perform a selection of operas including works by Verdi, Weill, Mozart, Stravinsky, Berg, and Wagner; led by James Levine, 5/10 at 8. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $21–$101.*

World Premiere of Song Cycles—Ned Rorem, composer, continues a series for contemporary composers, 5/10 at 8. *92nd St Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $25.*

New York Philharmonic—All-Mozart program with guest conductor Sir Colin Davis, 5/11–5/13 at 8. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $26–$92.*

Clarion Music Society—Presents "The Unknown Telemann," a chamber-music concert of the eighteenth-century composer's work, 5/11 at 8. *The Church of St. Luke in the Fields, 487 Hudson St. (212-772-4448); $24.*

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Closes the season performing Tableaux 4, 5, and 8 from Messiaen's *Saint Francis of Assisi*, 5/13 at 8. *Gilman Opera House, Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718-636-4100); $20–$55.*

The Chamber Music Society and the Orion String Quartet—Perform Beethoven's complete string quartets in six free concerts, each performance honoring a different charitable organization that benefits children, 5/12–5/23. Please call for times. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); free.*

The Dessoff Choirs—Sing in an evening of twentieth-century works including Menotti's *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore* as well as the premiere of Marshall Coid's *Whitman Cantata*, 5/13 at 8. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $20–$25.*

Dawn Upshaw, Soprano, and the Kronos Quartet—Perform "Tonight Is the Night: International Traditions in Song" in the second part of "Images of Dawn"—works by Osvaldo Golijov, Gabriela Ortiz, and others—5/13 at 8. *Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, 980 Park Ave., at 84th St. (212-721-6500); $38.*

Early Music Foundation—Celebrates Mother's Day performing *Laudate Matrem* ("In Praise of Motherhood"), 5/13 at 8 and 5/14 at 3. *The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (212-280-0330); $35–$60.*

Vladimir Feltsman, Piano—Plays works by Brahms, Haydn, and Chopin, 5/13 at 8. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $30.*

Dina Kuznetsova, Soprano—Sings works by Rossini, Wolf, Barber, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, and Szymanowsky, 5/14 at 3. The Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. (212-734-2130); $15.

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Presents a family and children's performance of Bizet's seldom-seen *Doctor Miracle*, 5/14 at 2. *92nd St Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); free.*

The Atlantic String Quartet and Eliza Garth, Piano—New and recent works for piano and strings, including Aaron Copland's Sonata for Violin and Piano, 5/15 at 8. *Merkin Concert Hall at the Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (212-501-3330); $8; $5 seniors and students.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Photograph by Paul Kolnik.

Preview

Siegfried and Royal Duty

When Prince Siegfried discovers he's been duped by Odile in *Swan Lake*, you feel bad for him but can't help but be mesmerized by the beautiful black swan and her conniving ways. Everybody plays the fool, but ballet generally gives more emphasis to female characters. In Kevin McKenzie's take on the Petipa classic, which will premiere next week in American Ballet Theatre's spring season at the Met, the young prince will finally have a chance to share his side of the story. "In the first act, I wanted him to have an aria of frustration, to lament his lost childhood," says McKenzie of Siegfried's royal duty to choose a bride from a select group of princesses. "You know he doesn't want to do this, but he knows he must," says ABT principal José Carreno, who will dance Siegfried. "Everyone has felt that." "It's about the male weakness of thinking, *I'll handle it now and figure it out later,*" McKenzie says of Siegfried's inability to recognize that the creature he fell in love with one night is not the vamp in the black tutu who has him by a leash the next. "It makes the betrayal more poignant," he says. "It deals with big human crises: coming of age, betrayal, infidelity, and growing pains. Hopefully, people will recognize it as truth." [See "Dance."] Rose-Anne Clermont

Opera

La Gran Scena—The all-male opera company opens its nineteenth season with *Murder Most Melodious*, directed by Francesco Folinari-Soave-Coglioni, 5/13 at 8 and 5/14 at 7. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-307-4100); $25–$45.*

Dance

American Ballet Theater—Opens its season with a new work by Twyla Tharp as well as a newly staged *Swan Lake*, choreographed by artistic director Kevin McKenzie, 5/8–7/1. Please call for performance schedule and prices. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000).*

Sin Cha Hong and Parul Shah, Choreographers—Present *Dong Dong Touching the Moons*, a multimedia piece juxtaposing traditional Asian dance and music forms with cutting-edge technology, 5/10–5/13 at 8; open dress rehearsal 5/9 at 4. *The Kitchen Center, 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793); $15, $5 for dress rehearsal.*

Fourth Dimension Dance—Performs *Sleeping Man*, a dance in five parts that portrays the behavior of a man who inhabits the many stages of sleep, but rarely lying down; choreography by Ryan Park; 5/9 and 5/10 at 8. *Context Theater, 28 Avenue A, bet. 2nd and 3rd Sts. (212-727-3861); $15, $12 students.*

Beppie Blankert, Choreographer—Performs *Double Track* in the "Global Exchange" project, 5/12–5/21. Please call for times. *Dance Theater Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. (212-924-0077); $15 first week, $20 thereafter.*

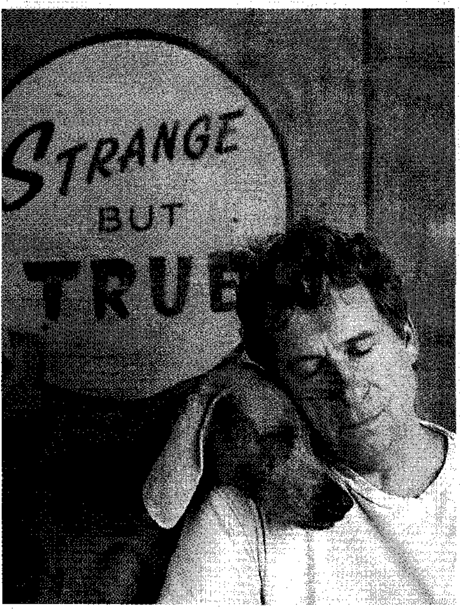
kids

Mom Books...Private School

Happening

Doggie See, Doggie Do

Back in 1970, a struggling California artist made a $35 purchase that would change his life. William Wegman (pictured) brought his new acquisition, a dog named Man Ray, into his world of photography, video, paintings, and books. The mocha-colored weimaraner and those who came after him, with their melancholy expression, long, floppy ears, and quiet demeanor, have since become legendary not only with adults but with the preschool crowd as well. The folks at *Sesame Street* continue to air segments with the Wegman dogs—including a well-known short with the dogs spelling out the letters of the alphabet—leading parents to wonder how he gets them to stay still. "They would do very poorly in obedience trials, I'm afraid," Wegman says from the Manhattan apartment he shares with his wife, two children, and Battina and Chip, the late Fay Ray's (no relation to the late Man Ray) daughter and grandson. "You can imagine getting a dog to pretend to read a book. If they're not going to do it, it doesn't make or break things. I'll do something else." On Saturday, Wegman, Battina, and Chip kick off the new "TV Lunch" series at the Kitchen, where the audience will be treated to selections of the artist's video work. Segments include some non-dog videos, featuring Wegman's dry satires of pop culture. But those that include the dogs are far more lighthearted and creative. The canines make popcorn, play baseball, bake a pineapple upside-down cake, and dress up for a who-are-the-people-in-your-neighborhood piece. Q. & A. follows, even for the dogs. (See Children's Events.) SUSAN AVERY



Children's Events

To the Dogs—Artist William Wegman and his calm, contortionistic canines will be the featured guests at the first of the Kitchen's new **TV LUNCH** series. Video screenings, a light meal, and discussion are on the agenda. 5/13 at 1 P.M. Limited seating (to 75). Recommended for kids age 5 and older. Tickets are $10. 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793).●

Mother's Day Material—Bookstores bring out their Sunday best this weekend in honor of the maternal instinct. Check out these new titles for a fresh approach: **MRS. HEN'S BIG SURPRISE** by Christel Desmoinaux shows a baby chick who's quite different from the others. Mrs. Hen's unconditional love is strong enough to overcome any obstacle. **MA DEAR'S APRON** by Patricia McKissack depicts the bond between a African-American boy and his mother in the South of the early 1900s. **WHEN MAMA COMES HOME TONIGHT** by Eileen Spinelli shows a reunion between a child and a working mother as they wind down for bedtime.

Fair Well—The West Side Montessori School holds its annual spring fair on 5/13 from 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. West 92nd Street between West End Avenue and Riverside Drive will be closed off to make room for live entertainment, rides, face-painting, an international food buffet, and crafts. Bargain hunters should seek out Second-Hand Sue for gently used clothing, toys, and more. Fair admission is free, but all activities come with a charge (212-662-8000).●

Getting In—Find out what it takes to gain admission to the city's most prestigious private schools. **THE PARENTS LEAGUE** will hold a free forum on 5/10 from 5:30 to 7 P.M. to answer questions and offer direction in this arduous process. Reps from schools will also be on hand. At Ethical Culture School, 33 Central Park West, at 63rd St. (212-737-7385).●●

Dormez-Vous?—The New York City Ballet performs the Peter Martins full-length production of Tchaikovsky's **THE SLEEPING BEAUTY**; 5/10–5/21. Tickets are $25–$72. At the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center, Broadway at 63rd St. (212-870-5570).

Ay, There's the Rub—The **CENTRAL PARK CONSERVANCY** will sponsor free craft workshops for kids on 5/13. At 2 P.M. at the Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 104th St., professional printmaker Cecily Barth Firestein will demonstrate how rubbings are made by reproducing the surface of a textured design. Call to register at 212-534-1672, ext. 257. At 1 P.M. at Belvedere Castle, mid-park at 79th St., learn how to make scented sachets from the natural fragrant elements found in the park. Call to register at 212-772-0210. At 1 P.M. at the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, 110th St. near Fifth Ave., participants will create their own candles. Call to register at 212-860-1370.●●

Extreme IMAX—Go rock climbing at Yosemite Park, ski down a slope at 60 miles per hour, and leap across a stage with a ballerina. **TO THE LIMIT**, the latest IMAX film at the Liberty Science Center, follows three athletes as they put their bodies through vigorous workouts and their minds through the drive for excellence. The film is 40 minutes long and showtimes are 11 A.M., 1 P.M., 3 P.M., and 5 P.M., seven days a week through June 2nd (a new schedule begins thereafter). Tickets are $8.50 for adults, $6.50 for kids and seniors. At Liberty State Park, 251 Phillip St., Jersey City, N.J. (201-200-1000).

Environmental Employment—Middle schoolers and high schoolers are invited to the New York Aquarium's **COASTAL AMERICA ENVIRONMENTAL CAREER FAIR**. Students can talk to professionals from the National Park Service, U.S. Coast Guard, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Environmental Conservation, and the EPA. 5/12 from 10 A.M.–1 P.M. Admission, which also includes all exhibits, is $9.75, $6 for kids 2–12 and seniors. There's also a $3.50 per person group rate. At Surf Ave. and W. 8th St., Coney Island (718-265-FISH).●

Poets and Peacemakers—Join Broadway stars as they salute world-peace efforts with free readings of works by winners of the Nobel Peace Prize and the Nobel Prize for Literature. 5/12 at 12:30 P.M. Presented by The International Project to Promote Peace and Unity Through the Arts. Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. (212-874-2225).

Man's Best Friend—Dutch theater crosses the Atlantic: The Ro Theatre Company performs *Runt*, a 120-minute musical set in France and featuring 28 doggie puppets. The curtain rises once on Fridays, twice on Saturdays and Sundays; through 5/21 at **THE NEW VICTORY THEATER**, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200). Tickets are $25, $20, and $10.

May Flowers—April's seemingly endless rain promised a colorful "Spectacular Spring Weekend" at **THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN**. More than 100,000 daffodils and 15,000 tulips mark the garden's peak bloom. The Chinese Peony Show displays 100 brilliant specimens; 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd., the Bronx (718-817-8700). Garden Passport combination tickets, which include admission to all exhibits, are $10 for adults, $7.50 for students and seniors, $4 for children ages 2–12.

Chocoholic—Sunday afternoons in May, **THE SCREENING ROOM** presents *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory.* Showtime is 1 P.M. Tickets are $6 for children under 12, $9 for adults (or $6 for adults if you have brunch). Brunch is available before the show; the kids' menu includes triangle-shaped noodles and French-toast fingers. 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100).

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

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Kids

Ethan Brown
Nightlife

Luisa Colon
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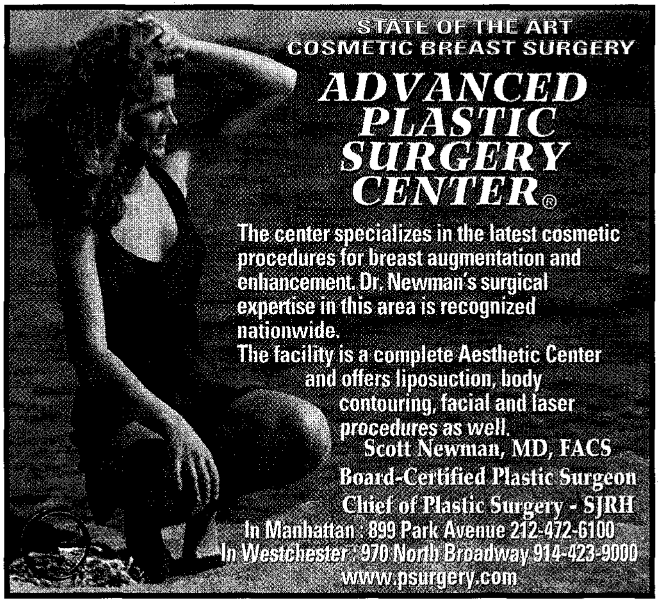
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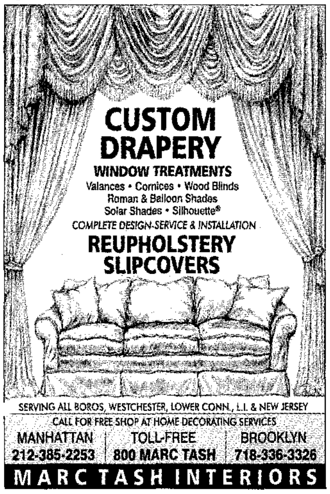
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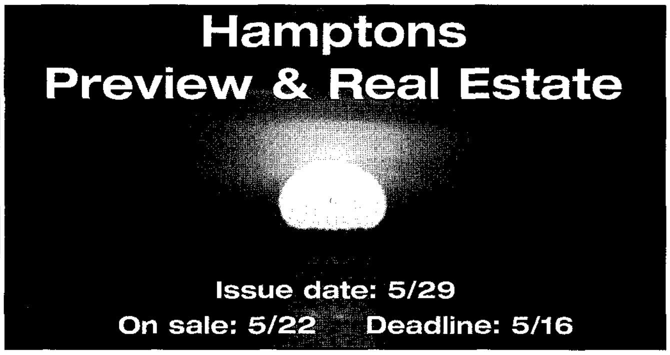

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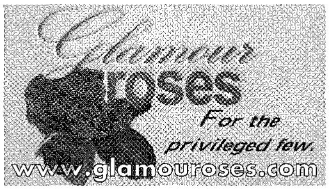

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Great-Looking, Fit Brunette—Jewish LI widow, to share laughter and good times with male counterpart, 65-70. 4096 ✉

Nice Guy, Strong Values—Handsome, fit professional, 45, like engaging talk, the outdoors and NYC culture, thoughtful and affectionate, self-aware, don't snore, seeks warm, smart, loving lady. 4142 ✉

Socialite—Seeks comparable gentleman (50s-70) who appreciates a lady who is elegant and proper yet sexy and passionate. Note/photo a must. 4137 ✉

Young-At-Heart Widower—50, no children, financially secure, 6', fit, educated, athletic and handsome, with a great sense of humor. This kind man of character is willing to give his heart, his soul, his very being to the woman who can realize his worth and reciprocate. You? 30s-mid 40s, attractive on the outside, but it is the inside that counts. A good man is hard to find? You just found one! 4136 ✉

My Boss Is Hard To Shop For—So, for his 50th birthday, I thought I'd get him a girlfriend. Him: self-made, successful musician; sensitive, intelligent and handsome. Favorite interests: art, gardening and kids. You: intelligent, beautiful and warm. Photo and letter, please. 4116 ✉

Ready At Last—Single, white, very successful 45-year-old male knows that, finally, it's time to settle down. I'm tall, athletic, sexy, and smart enough to know what I've been missing. I'm seeking a bright, very fit, confident woman (21-35), who generally intimidates the men she meets, but deep down inside is just a little girl. Be my best friend and lover, as we share life's ups and downs forever. Like me, you love travel, the arts, little kids and staying fit. I'm ready. Are you? Photo/phone a must. 4068 ✉

Gay, Good-Looking, In-Shape—60, gentleman, accomplished, stylish, affluent, 5'11", 175 lbs - interested in arts, travel, gardens, country/city life style. Seeks sensitive, bright, creative younger counterpart for serious exclusive relationship. Photo essential. 4075 ✉

Cute, Classy—50s professional female with looks, smarts, warmth, wit, seeks significant other, 55-70. 4120 ✉☎

5'4", Size 4—Jewish, divorced female, great-looking, great shape, great attitude. Communicative, honest, financially/emotionally secure, refined. No time for bitterness or anger. Wants same in handsome man, 45-59. Note/photo. 4091 ✉

Reach For A Dream!—With a kind-hearted, dynamic surgeon, with boyish looks, humor, upbeat, loves fitness, fun, laughter, 5'10", muscular, 43. Seeks bright adventuress under 38 for magic. Phone photo a must. 4141 ✉ ☎

Slim Brunette, MBA—Petite, seeks secure man, 40-54, for marriage. 4090 ✉

She: Beautiful, Classy—5'5", interesting, caring, romantic at heart, in (212). He: lover of all things cultural, wanting to travel, mensch, 60 plus. Foreign-born a plus. They: enjoying the best life has to offer together. All replies answered. 4101 ✉☎

Take Charge—Beautiful, slender brunette (43) with a sophisticated, elegant demeanor, desires a worldly, accomplished man for pursuing mutual interests and relationship. 4133 ✉☎

Seeking Feminine, Kissable Lady—Over 45. I'm a young-looking, unconventional, 40-year-old, single white male, 6' tall, slim, nicely built, handsome professional working in banking. I'm very romantic and affectionate, with an excellent sense of humor and a sweet nature. I like slow dancing and slow kissing. Let's explore the possibilities of a relationship together. I await your letter, including your photo and phone number. 4078 ✉

Natural Beauty, Caribbean-American—Single professional female, cocoa brown, 37, 5'8", athletic, adventurous, well-traveled, eclectic interests and friends, great sense of humor, seeks committed relationship with single/divorced professional male of any race, 30-50, who feels comfortable in jeans/tuxedo. You are adventurous, compassionate, with a sense of humor. Drug/disease-free. Communication and honesty matter. 4063 ✉☎ d.j.m@mindspring.com

This Attractive, Green-Eyed—Petite lady loves the allure and adventure of life, and seeks a best friend to share it with. A busy career has brought success on one front, but I want the hand of Mister Wonderful to accompany me along the rest of the way. If you're 40-something, have your head together, a sense of humor and a happy outlook on life, please drop me a note/picture/call. 4134 ✉☎

Widower—Recently returned to Manhattan, seeking my counterpart. I am young in mind, body and spirit, 70 years old; a tall, active, healthy, Jewish (nonreligious) professional. Love travel, music, dancing, opera, and all that NY and the world has to offer. I am an honest, unselfish, caring and affectionate person, seeking a woman in her early to mid 60s; slim and attractive. Note/photo appreciated. 4092 ✉

Desirable, Accomplished, Relocatable—Woman seeks man, 55-65, for romance, companionship and devotion. 4115 ✉

A Warmhearted Lady For You—Laughter-loving, fun, single Jewish lady, 5'6", 120, 40, with great legs, a sparkling personality and a sense of the absurd. My dream man: fun, well-educated, great listener and communicator, very successful and accomplished (CEO/investment/entrepreneur type), Jewish, spiritual, 40-54. leggyjlady@aol.com 4074 ✉☎

Sleek, Sophisticated Indian Beauty—5'8", 125 lbs, 32 years, with infectious smile and an upbeat disposition. Seeks successful professional man, 35-42, with a practical mind and adventurous spirit, who loves to travel, values family and has a passion for cappuccino and Belgian waffles. Photo, please. 4106 ✉

6'4", Good-Looking—43, extremely successful businessman, involved in the sports industry, seeks a beautiful, very sexy woman under 38, with a sense of humor, pleasant personality, animal lover a plus. We enjoy the gym followed by a great restaurant, then a weekend trip to an exotic island to relax on the beach. 4127 ✉☎

You'd Never Know He's Gay—Is how this good-looking, bright, sophisticated, Jewish, funny Ivy League guy is often described. In search of 30-something soul mate who's okay with being gay in a straight world. 4086 ✉☎

A Most Special Lady—Beauty, brains, warmth and love are waiting for a 65-75-year old man who is attractive, kind, and economically secure. This lovely package awaits your call. 4130 ✉ ☎

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A Different Proposal—49-years-young European male - multifaceted, athletic - seeks retooling from 9-5 professional drudge to a full-time homemaker/parent with a sunny, sassy, shapely career woman of prime childbearing age. 4111 ✉

NJ Gentleman, Educator—61. Seeks educated, successful, petite and attractive, nonsmoking Christian woman who enjoys the outdoors, a cozy fireplace and romance. Photo/note. 4125 ✉

Pretty, Witty And Wise—Vivacious, Jewish, widowed professional woman would like to meet you if you're a professional Jewish guy who's lovable, funny, fit and secure, 50-60, nonsmoker. Photo/note/phone. 4085 ✉ ☎

Handsome, Sincere—6' gentleman, dentist, 44, seeks pretty, kind, spirited lady. Photo/bio. 4089 ✉☎

Petite Blond Beauty—Ready to spice life of 55-70 male, non-retired, successful professional, active in business and pleasures of living. 4087 ✉

Upper West Side Story—Stars pretty, creative, warm, smart, sophisticated brunette, great legs (care of biking, skiing, blading, tennis, etc.). My leading man is 38-45, tall, athletic, altruistic, with an inquiring mind and wit, enjoys challenges and gourmet cooking. His cast may include children and dogs. For keeps. Happy ending included. 4114 ✉ ☎

Looking For My Marriage Partner—Professional Jewish male, sincere with traditional values, sense of humor, understanding, seeks down-to-earth, kind female, 36-43, for a happy future. Photo. 4138 ✉

Smart, Ambitious, Attractive—Tall, size 6, who enjoys the slopes, seeks successful, educated Italian man, 35-45, with a great personality - for fun and romance. Must be marriage-minded. Note/photo. 4118 ✉

Asian—Wish to share tremendous life with male of decency, 46-56. 4139 ✉

Pretty, Slim—Divorced white female, 36, professional, 5'6", 120 lbs, seeks tall, attractive professional man who is kind, down-to-earth and easy to talk to. 4128 ✉☎

Nice Guy—59, 5'8", full salt-and-pepper hair, outgoing, seeks single woman, 5'3" plus, thin, nonsmoker, 43-52, to share conversation, quiet evenings, dining out and more. Photo. 4110 ✉☎

Great Lips And Legs—Sexy, hip, divorced mom, 30s, petite professional, (212) area, seeks hip guy without khakis who knows how to love. Photo, please. NYCMOM002@aol.com 4103 ✉

Attractive, Successful, Articulate—Professional and single mom, late 40s, petite and blond, seeks a romantic Jewish male with inner beauty. I'm not looking for perfection, just a best friend and lover. 4066 ✉

Hispanic Male, 55—Seeks full-figured white female. Loves ice cream, wine, music. Single two years; help. 4119 ✉

Attractive, Young-Looking—Scandinavian woman, 54, seeking soul mate, 54 and under. Attracted to black men. 4105 ✉

Striking, Highlighted Beauty—63, looks and acts 45, seeks financially and emotionally secure, handsome man who enjoys the passion and affection of a woman. Young in appearance, with upbeat, positive attitude, looking for romantic, fun-loving, honest partner to enjoy the joys of life together. 4065 ✉

LI Widower—Jewish, 5'9", attractive, retired businessman, seeking attractive woman, 55-60, for companionship and travel. Photo and note. 4117 ✉

Handsome Financial Executive—Seeks my one and only. She should be 28-36, beautiful, fit, sexy, intelligent, Jewish, and be comfortable in formal as well as in jeans. Me: just turned 38, fit, into outdoor activities, romantic evenings, the beach, theater and music. Recent photo/note/phone. 4081 ✉

Upper West Side Sweetheart—Seeks kind, fun-loving, smart, successful Jewish man, 40-50, for best friend for life. This slim, beautiful (brown eyes, honey hair, 5'4"), energetic woman wants to create a home together that has warmth, laughter, family and friends. 4076 ✉☎

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The woman he wants to marry is smart, sexy, sassy, spirited, witty and bold. She is adventurous, outgoing, playful and beautiful outside and in. She is almost literally bursting with natural energy and she sparkles in every setting. She is someone who speaks up when things aren't going well and shouts from the rooftops when things are great. She is a city girl, but craves the ocean and greenery as well. She is spontaneous with eclectic tastes, the kind of woman who is happy on the couch with a video one night, then hopping a flight to Paris on a whim the next. She is open and affectionate, someone who likes to hold hands on the street and snuggle on long car trips. She has a happy and fulfilled life, but like him is missing that one essential piece; a loving relationship based on honesty, trust and communication.

If you are, or know, the woman for this phenomenal man please submit a recent **photo, bio** and **phone number** (a must). Each submission will be kept confidential

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PLACE YOUR AD IN THE SUMMER ENTERTAINING ISSUE

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Denim To Evening Dress—30, single white female, brown eyes, auburn hair, world traveler, adventurer - likes to try new things, enjoys staying home watching videos or going to NY for a play. Enjoys riding in Jackson Hole to scuba diving in Caribbean. Done a lot in the world and want to do a lot more. Looking for someone who's financially secure, who loves to live life to its fullest. Photo and e-mail. 4067 ✉

Super-Nice Guy—Romantic, affectionate, loving, young 40s, 6', 175, athletic, cute, love beach, sports, dining. Photo. 4131✉☎

Sensual, Smart, Successful—Attractive, happy woman, 56, seeks a passionate, unpretentious, honest and loving man. 4140 ✉

Adorable, Accomplished Widow—60s, Reform Jewish. Was editor, now does free-lance business. Active, works out. Seeks man, 60-70s, bright, professional, active, trim, with humor. 4083 ✉☎

Mid 50s, Tall, Warm, Sincere—Honest, nice-looking, athletic male would like to start over. Recent photo. 4102 ✉

Hamptons Preview & Real Estate

New York Magazine's insights into the East Coast's most renowned resort makes this a highly coveted issue. Although our readers love the Hamptons, not all of them have a house there. Use this terrific issue to let them know about your Hamptons accommodations.

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On sale: 5/22 Deadline: 5/16

Attractive, Vivacious Poet/Professor—Jewish single mom invites a cultivated and prosperous gentleman (50-65) to share the ups and downs of family life. 4064 ✉

Want To "Go Steady"?—Vivacious, attractive, nurturant Jewish female, 45, fashion industry executive. Although you have heard it, been there, seen it, done it, well, they say "it only takes one". Surely, you will not be disappointed with me. You are a Jewish male, 45-55, seeking genuine friendship and more. Will look forward to hearing from you. Photo appreciated. 4099 ✉☎

Mid-40ish Tall Guy—To meet an attractive 30ish gal who enjoys the city, country and traveling - to have a great time together and is interested in starting a family with children. Picture/note. 4094✉

Widower, 49—Jewish, slim, with college-age daughter, LI/NY vicinity, looking for soul mate. You have passion, humor, depth, good looks, and can name five Beatles songs. Note/photo, please. 4088✉

Single White Male—Professional, 50, seeks female for relationship. 4084 ✉☎

Petite, Fit, Free-Spirited Blond—Voracious reader, interested in finance, law, rollerblading and all four-legged creatures; gives great dinner parties. Seeks witty, liberal guy, 50-65. 4107✉☎

Sum Greater Than Parts—The parts include: mid 30s, attractive, athletic, petite brunette - vivacious, accomplished media professional. Seeks a man, mid 30s/early 40s, who has emotional intelligence, is physically fit, financially stable, honest and ready for a relationship. Our pastimes might include: tennis, billiards, travel and the arts. Note/photo. 4124 ✉

Attractive Asian MD—Bright, independent, wealthy, passionate, sexy, seeks honest, sensible, professional and successful gentleman over 35, for marriage. Photo. supergirlAA@yahoo.com. 4093 ✉

Up-Front And Personal—Attractive, tall, educated, independent, affluent single female, 54, herpes, seeking tall, single man, 50-60, successful, intelligent, affluent, kind, understanding. 4113 ✉

Picky, Picky - Not!—Attractive, slender, caring, witty Jewish female, 51, seeks relationship with nonsmoking - prefer Jewish - 48-58, tall, energetic and educated single white male. Photo/note/phone. 4121✉

Tall, Pretty, Divorced Jewish Mother—39, artistic, seeks tall, kind, creative, intelligent, Jewish, divorced/widowed father to connect with - mind, body and soul. creativityabc@yahoo.com. 4072✉☎

Winning The Lottery Is Winning Me—Positively gorgeous, refined, considerate, charming, never married, nonreligious Jewish attorney. Write if you are of equal calibre. 42-52. Photo. 4080 ✉☎

Tall, Attractive, Sexy—Cultured lady, 52, warm, witty, caring professional, seeks special male for now and forever. 4132✉☎

Bi? - Hi!—Attractive, sensitive, upscale, gay Hispanic male, professional, 37, seeks masculine bisexual male, over 35, for friendship and more. 4098 ✉

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New York Magazine, Box # ______
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Who Wants To Be A Winner?—Get ready for the time of your life! You'll meet a beautiful, slender, witty woman, bright smile, great legs, smart and sophisticated, with varied interests that range from the Yankees to the arts to politics. Jewish man in his 60s must be special: accomplished, educated, cultured, mannered, humorous, thoughtful and secure. Are you man enough? Photo and note. 4126 ✉

Commitment-Minded Executive—Great guy, attractive, happy, energetic, sincere, supportive, Jewish, financially secure, well-educated, funny, world traveler, great life style, youthful early 50s... Seeking the right lady to share everything with. Please be full of life, attractive and happy. Note/photo. 4135 ✉

Beautiful, Slender Redhead—Vibrant, successful professional - seeks soul mate. You are kind, loving, emotionally reliable (59-69). We can communicate as best friends, share our interests and create a loving relationship. 4070 ✉

Brown-Eyed Girl—Pretty, fun, energetic, Jewish, 5'3", young 43, affectionate, fit, 212, enjoys outdoors, arts. Seeks kind, confident 40s man to share life with. Photo. youremybrowneyed@yahoo.com 4100 ✉

Attractive French Lady, 45—5'9", divorced, one son, caring, vivacious, easygoing, honest, romantic, sensitive, great personality, seeks serious gentleman with equal values. Photo/note. 4071 ✉

Single, LI, Jewish White Male—36 years, whose sincerity does not permit an overstatement of his talents or appearance, but who is financially independent, considerate and kind, desires becoming a spouse. Only those of similar temperament and need should respond with note and recent photo. 4123 ✉

All That's Best Of Dark And Bright—Intelligent, cultured and refined, a lover of the arts. This handsome, upbeat and family-oriented professional seeks a woman with similar values. I'm 41, 5'10", with brown hair and hazel eyes, a passion for life and the ability to laugh through adversity. You are 30-40, with a sparkling smile, warm heart and the life experience to know the secret of sharing. Note/photo/phone. 4108 ✉☎

Hi Active Females—This very youthful guy seeks your company for adventure. I am handsome, MBA, blond/blue, 49, athletic build, tall, with a passion for skiing, outdoor activities, etc., for long-term relationship, laughter, loyalty, love. Please be 35-48, any geographic area okay. P27NY@aol.com 4073 ✉

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MARY ANN MADDEN #970

NEW YORK MAGAZINE COMPETITION

"Hollander residence."
"Am I speaking to the lady of the house?"

" 'Allo, this is Celine—did you get my pictures?"
"Hi, Miss Dion. We did, but why the long face?"

"Is this AA?"
"Who's this?"

Above, telephone exchanges. Competitors are invited to invent a brief conversation opening crammed with irony.

Results of Competition 967, in which you were asked to invent a fable with a punned or mangled moral.

Report: No matter how contrived (as in opporknockity tunes) the setup, the payoffs here are first-rate. We passed over the old: stowing thrones, hair today, a fool and his Monet, etc. A random rhyme, "A hitch in grime laves fine," is no form of pun. First-rate, these. Thanks. Hate your SUV. Have a sappy Hummer.

First Prizes of two-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

Oxford and Cambridge sculls race in March; the Henley Regatta is in May. April is the crewless month.
John Paul Dobbs, Florence, Ala.

The Serengeti suffered a yearlong drought and, to survive, many animals took to eating their own. The Lion King vowed to resist this abominable fate. But his hunger grew until even he had to swallow his pride.
Lucy Oblonsky, Hockessin, Del.

Two Newcastle miners gaze dubiously at a grotesque anthracite sculpture in front of City Hall. Finally one says to the other, "Let's haul the coal thing off."
Holly Thomis, Cambridge, Mass.

Runner-up Prizes of one-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

An erstwhile tabloid freelancer is now writing for *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*. She has gone from rags to Regis.
Sarah Gay, Atlanta, Ga.

Sir Regis is preparing to joust when he notices Gawain unsheathing a plastic weapon. Curious, Regis asks, "Is that your vinyl lance, sir?"
Karen Bracey, Burke, Va.

And Honorable Mention to:

A rock star's maid quits and applies for a job in the NYPD forensics lab. In the interview she proudly points to her many years of dusting for Prince.
Bill Harriman, East Lyme, Conn.

Does Christopher Robin abuse his imaginary friends? "Absolutely not," claims A. A. Milne. "Christopher is too good to beat Roo."
Louise Jackson, Somerset, Mass.

Swindled a thousand times by scurrilous Arab chiefs, a Bedouin trader wanders the desert looking for a fair sheik.
Marc Doyle, Hockessin, Del.

Lost in the desert, a delusional Nicolas Cage stumbles into town covered with thistles and breaks out in song. Maya Angelou asks herself, "I wonder why the burred Cage sings?"
Jane Kretzmann, Seaside, Calif.

Hans Holbein grew up on Germany's Baltic coast, where winters are brutally cold. His paintings are celebrated even today for evoking the warm glow of the hearth. To Germans this makes sense: cold Hans, warm art.
Inger Pettygrove, Charlottesville, Va.

I like jazz, hip-hop, rap, pop—but not those tacky boy bands. What do I listen to? Everything but the kitsch, 'N Sync.
Mike Reiss, Los Angeles, Calif.

When a red deer dies at the National Zoo, Chet Huntley lends the zoo a stag from his private game preserve. The exhibit plaque reads: The hart is a Huntley loaner.
Dot Edwards, Galena, Mo.

Botanists admire the wisteria's intricate and colorful network. Some attribute the flower's astounding beauty to evolution, but the spiritual know God works in wisteria's maze.
Linda Giordano, Florence, Ala.

London apartment-building residents agitate over the terrible state of their bathrooms. They hold several angry meetings, but can't agree on what to do. Theirs is just a loo-snit organization.
Mary Jane Gore, Charlottesville, Va.

Grey Wolf told Little Bear about a terrible winter. He spoke of the cold, and how it tore through his animal-hide tepee, calling it "The Winter of Our Deerskin Tent."
Paul D. Salmon, Brick, N.J.

Bob was selected to be a contestant on a well-known quiz show. He studied everything he could about contemporary pop culture. On the show, he used all of his lifelines on questions concerning Cleopatra and Napoleon, which proves that you can't be a millionaire unless you know your asp from your Elba.
Bruce Karp, Hackensack, N.J.

. . . Little Red Riding Hood met her end when something she disagreed with ate her.
Fred Buffa, Staten Island, N.Y.

The hungry poet was anxious to sell his creation for a big bird, a plump roasting chicken. But there were no offers. Desperate and starving, he eventually took a tern for the verse.
Eli Gabel, Staten Island, N.Y.

Celeste Holm's friends teased her about her men. Celeste was a good sport, but she fell for Ralph Nelson and became sensitive. They concluded that Ralph was nothing to ride Holm about.
Paula Doherty, Tiverton, R.I.

Moses struggled to carry the tablets up Sinai. Gordius wrapped a rope around them for a handgrip. Moses, impressed, advised his friend, "This thou shouldst market." And so was born the first knot-for-prophet business.
Joel Sitrin, Annandale, Va.

Little Matt is a terror. His parents have gone through many baby-sitters. In desperation, the parents consult a psychologist, who notes that this is a case of Matt over minder.
Brian Smith, Stamford, Conn.

Life was hard for Dolly the sheep after her birth in Scotland. Cast out by the herd, she roamed the hills uttering noisy bleats. As Dolly put it, "I wandered loudly as a clone."
Chris Doyle, Burke, Va.

To liven up a party, some New Yorkers invite a well-known Parisian designer. Others favor Steve, a New York shoe designer, and advise, "Don't get Yves, get Madden."
Adam Doyle, Blacksburg, Va.

An Austrian baker moonlights as a lawyer. When his brother is injured in a soccer match, the baker files a civil suit, thus creating the famous soccer tort.
Susan Harriman, San Francisco, Calif.

The 76ers' GM, Al Rosen, strikes a deal with the Knicks: Iverson for Ewing plus a player to be named. Expecting a guard, Rosen complains when the Knicks send a forward. The Knicks' owner replies, "Hey, I never promised you a guard, Rosen."
Michael Flitter, Elkins Park, Pa.

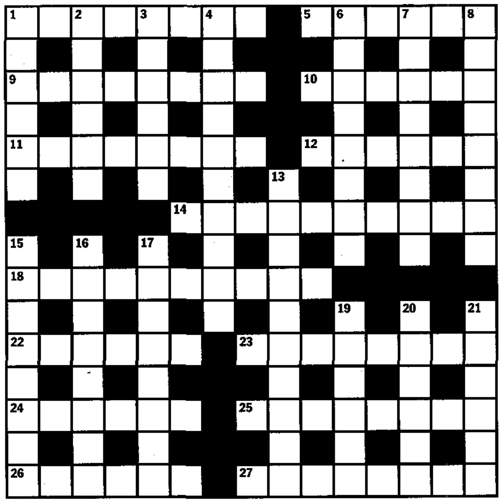
The lion had a thorn in his paw. A mouse promised him that he'd remove it if the lion promised to spare his life. The lion agreed and the thorn was removed. As the lion prepared to swallow the mouse, he was asked, "But I thought you promised not to eat me." The moral: A friend in need is an unlikely source for venture capital.
Dan Schustack, New Rochelle, N.Y.

Rules: Postcards, please, typed if possible. **ONE ENTRY ONLY** to Competition Number 970, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999. E-mail to 104700.2563@compuserve.com, **WITH STREET ADDRESS.** Entries must be received by May 19. Editor's decisions are final, and all entries become property of *New York.* Results and winners' names will appear in the June 19–26 issue.

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

1 Model design of map with a grid. (8)
5 Add decoration to space on head. (6)
9 Big cats eating sloths—they may be dangerous. (8)
10 An ecclesiastical post in the mountains. (6)
11 Worm turning in secure accommodation for old leader. (8)
12 Badger has to accommodate artists. (6)
14 Novelty pub gets applause. (10)
18 Uncle felt a change of wind. (10)
22 Surface for work unit in the interior of Yemen. (6)
23 Get to weigh unorthodox ingredient of meringue. (3,5)
24 One half of disease on a peninsula. (6)
25 Type of fracture for hospital carrier. (8)
26 Threaten to go out with The Disemboweller. (6)
27 Oaf, high-handed, returning North with Biblical marauder. (8)



DOWN

1 Put outside a grand building. (6)
2 Cause to think logically. (6)
3 Want nothing more to do with racket involving pig. (6)
4 One with itchy finger finds it cosy, on reflection, to stay. (10)
6 End of poem and a song at the end of the road in a song. (8)
7 Drinks dispenser keeping time in musical. (8)
8 Go wrong but get medal, entering second with a lilt. (8)
13 Weed getting one to sing to psychiatrist? (5-5)
15 Sacrifice of iron band. (8)
16 Animal eating seed frame. (8)
17 Morass of paper swamping yearly get-together. (8)
19 What sort of keyboard? That's the question we try resolving. (6)
20 Minimum cover for takin' two-wheeler to Italy. (6)
21 Humble compiler in forest. (6)

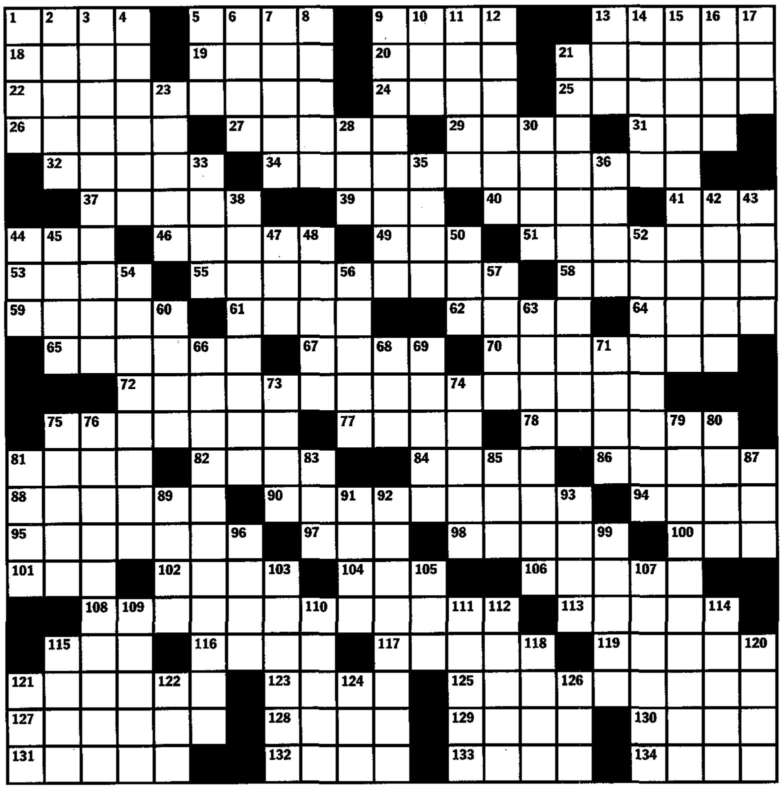
'Fictional Moms': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

1 Neighbor of Niger
5 Comstock, e.g.
9 Mil. mail depots
13 Yellow pigment
18 Landed
19 —— go bragh
20 Part of a three-piece suit
21 Texas border city
22 Certain North Americans
24 Andean Indian
25 Lacking muscle tension
26 Edge one's way
27 Daughter of 72-Across
29 In among
31 Autumn calendar pg.
32 Hammers' targets
34 Mom who wore a scarlet letter
37 TV legal series
39 La-la lead-in
40 Director Vittorio De ——
41 Partner of wide
44 Trifling turmoil
46 Greek marketplace
49 Kabibble of early TV
51 Winter Olympics site, 1972
53 "La Bohème" heroine
55 Mom in "The Yearling"
58 Home of Bradley University
59 Leavening agent
61 Serb, ethnically
62 Waiter's handout
64 Pipe feature
65 Wild
67 Riata's relative
70 Stone Age tools
72 "The Glass Menagerie" mom
75 Mom, on May 14th
77 Shadowbox
78 Like a sauna
81 Smear on
82 III times DXVII
84 Second largest Hawaiian Island
86 Scatter about
88 Perceptive
90 "Tobacco Road" mom
94 Ferrara noble, once
95 More masculine
97 Peer Gynt's mom
98 Madre's money
100 Cherry discard
101 Comic-actor Erwin
102 Give off
104 Phone cut-in
106 Western lake resort
108 Flaubert's title mom
113 Capital of Morocco
115 His mom was Nancy Hanks
116 Virginia dance
117 "Cats" poet
119 Having many francs
121 Ordained one
123 Filled tortilla
125 Not bare, as an apartment
127 Any Louisiana county
128 His mom was Rebecca
129 False witness
130 Unadulterated
131 Plus factor
132 Roomer's remittance
133 One-named Irish singer
134 Prophetic sign

DOWN

1 Brit. raincoats
2 Delon or Resnais
3 Mom in an Arthur Miller play
4 Al —— (airline to Rome)
5 Wahine's garland
6 Kind of vaccine
7 Singing Washington
8 Come afterward
9 Earhart, for one
10 Corral
11 Coveted statuette
12 Philatelists' interests
13 Cereal bit
14 Sing like Bing
15 From now on
16 Make emends
17 Sinbad's bird
21 Juliet's mom
23 Reese of "Touched by an Angel"
28 Alphabetic trio
30 Colored area of the eye
33 Pudding starch
35 "Sidewalks of New York" opener
36 Back of the neck
38 Deteriorated
42 First zodiac sign
43 Meander
44 Daughter of 66-Down
45 God, to Gide
47 "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-——"
48 Addis's go-with
50 Stitched-down edge
52 Time it later
54 Constantinople, today
56 Declares firmly
57 Coral formation
60 Before Shanter, in a Burns poem
63 Least quiet
66 "Little Women" mom
68 Mouth piece
69 "A deed without ——": "Macbeth"
71 Islands, in the Seine
73 Between Walter and Mare
74 Understand the meaning of
75 Goes on the attack
76 Exceeds in amount
79 Polly's mom in "The Beggar's Opera"
80 The Abominable Snowman
81 Moms, animal style
83 "High Sierra" actress Lupino
85 Trucklike sport vehicle, for short
87 Sopping
89 In a dead heat
91 Apropos of
92 Omit
93 Lion's greeting
96 Hoarfrost
99 Memorable puppeteer Lewis
103 Seem about to fall
105 Buddy
107 California's San Luis ——
109 Eaglet's birthplace
110 World-weary
111 The "R" in 126-Down
112 "I'll See —— My Dreams"
114 Half a reassurance
115 Cry of woe
118 Cafeteria tote
120 Garden spot
121 Tax pro
122 Instrument-player suffix
124 Recyclable item
126 Gun lobby: abbr.



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 10

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